

**IMPROVING UPPER EXTREMITY FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE AFTER STROKE:  
WOULD PRESSURE GARMENT HELP?**

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**Introduction:** Stroke can cause limited functional performance at the affected upper extremity (UE). This study was conducted to evaluate the usefulness of pressure garment (PG) for UE functional improvement in persons with 1 – 12 months of ischemic or hemorrhagic stroke. **Methodology:** By randomly assigning 46 participants with criteria: aged  $\geq 21$  years old; Mini Mental State Examination score  $\geq 24$ ; and Modified Ashworth Scale (MAS) score of 1 – 3 when wrist and hand perform flexion and extension movements into intervention group (IG) or control group (CG), the study evaluated the UE performance of participants using Jebsen-Taylor Hand Function Test (JTHFT) before and after 6 weeks of intervention. Apart from the weekly conventional occupational therapy programme for both groups, IG also received a pressure garment (a long glove) to be worn for 6 hours a day for 6 weeks. **Results:** Both IG ( $n=21$ ) and CG ( $n=22$ ) was comparable in terms of gender, age, type of stroke, and dominant side affected at baseline. After 6 weeks of intervention, only IG showed significant improvement, in Subtest 5 ( $p=0.03$ ) and Subtest 6 ( $p=0.05$ ). Though both groups had participants who failed to perform JTHFT subtests before intervention; after intervention, descriptively, IG had more participants who were able to perform the subtests compared to CG. **Discussion/ Conclusion:** PG is useful in improving UE functional performance of persons with stroke. Integrating PG into stroke rehabilitation by occupational therapists may promote better overall functional outcome.