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You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

If you are unhappy with the advice you have been given by your GP, consultant, or another healthcare professional, you may ask for a second (or further) opinion.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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The Vicair Vector O2 Cushion (page 1 of 4)

Why do I need a Vicair Vector O2 cushion?

Your injury means that you may easily develop pressure marks and ulcers. You have been assessed as needing a specialist cushion to reduce the chance of this happening.

The Vicair Vector O2 Cushion



There are different types of Vicair cushions available, all are similar in construction.

Due to variations in the Vicair range it is advisable not to use a different type of

Vicair cushion until you have been assessed for its use.

Please contact the staff at the Pressure Clinic who will be able to help.

The Vicair Vector O2 cushion uses small plastic pyramid-shaped air

pockets (Smart Cells), which sit on top of one another in closed compartments.



The Vicair Vector O2 cushion comes in 6cm or 10cm heights. Due to muscle bulk loss around their seating bones, we recommend spinally injured patients use the 10cm height version, which offers more immersion into the cushion.

The Vicair Vector O2 gives stability and good weight distribution whilst helping with overall positioning and support. This design makes the cushion lightweight and durable, and can be adapted to suit your individual needs.

Two types of outer cover are available:

- a material cover with a zipper at the back. This is also used for incontinence protection.
- a stretchable 'topper' cover which fits over the cushion like a cap and facilitates ventilation.



Pressure Clinic
 **01722 429291**

Before use

The cushion is protected by the outer cover (which can be removed for washing) and a breathable mesh inner cover. This mesh inner cover is separated into the different compartments which hold the Smart Cells in each section.

A zipper is used around the outside of the mesh inner cover so that Smart Cells can be removed. Always check the mesh inner cover for loss of shape, wear or compression.

The outer cover protects the cushion. Always replace worn or damaged covers. It is at the discretion of your cushion supplier if a spare outer cover is provided. Replacement covers are available from your wheelchair service or the supplier of your cushion.

A pelvic stabiliser must only be used with the outer cover with a zipper. Place the pelvic stabiliser between the inner cover and the outer cover, at the front of the cushion (as directed) and ensure the cushion is assembled correctly before mobilising.

A pelvic stabiliser cannot be used without an outer cover.

Daily checks

The Vicair Vector 02 cushion requires minimal maintenance.

If someone else is doing this for you, they need you tell them how to do it and make sure that they do as you have told them.

Regularly check the condition of the zipper on the mesh inner cover and if damaged, seek replacement of cushion immediately.

To prevent the cushion 'bottoming out', the air cells must be dispersed around the different compartments to provide sufficient padding under your bottom. To do this, gently shake the cushion before getting into your wheelchair each time.

The blue loop handle can be used as a visual guide to show if the cover has been put on correctly and that the cushion is not placed the wrong way round (not back to front or upside down) inside the outer cover. The blue loop handle at the back of the inner cover is passed through the small loophole at the back of the outer cover.

Placing the complete assembled cushion the wrong way round can cause significant skin damage. The cushion has descriptive labels on the sides and underside (at the back) of the cover to enable correct positioning before using it.

Using the cushion

The range of Vicair Academy cushions are designed to be used with the outer cover for maximum efficiency. We advise you not to use the cushion without the outer cover.

Do not leave your cushion close to a naked flame or exposed to extreme temperatures.

We advise you not to store items under or to the side of your cushion because this could create a higher seating pressure, and lead to pressure marks or ulcers.

Sharp objects may puncture and split the mesh inner cover. Should this happen you must contact your wheelchair service or your cushion supplier immediately.

Removal, replacement and care of Smart Cells

Because each Smart Cell is filled with air, the cushion may behave differently when used at high altitude such as when used in an aeroplane. In such situations, the cushion's firmness can be adjusted by removing a few cells from each compartment temporarily.

After landing, the Smart Cells must be reinserted back into the appropriate compartments.

This should only be done after consulting your cushion supplier or the Pressure Clinic for advice on safe removal of Smart Cells before your departure date.

The zipper runs along all the sides of the mesh inner cover to allow removal of the Smart Cells.

Smart Cells should only be added or removed from the cushion for specific reasons such as positional support or travelling. It is important you note how many Smart Cells are removed and from which compartment.

For guidance a label is provided on the recommended filling of Smart Cells in each compartment. This can be found underneath the seat cushion on the right-hand side or attached to the bottom of the back cushions.

We recommend that all Smart Cells are inspected every 3 months. If a large number of Smart Cells appear deflated or damaged, discontinue use and contact your provider immediately.

You are at risk of skin damage if you add or remove any Smart Cells from the compartments without guidance or further assessment from a healthcare professional.

The maximum user weight of the Vector 02 cushion is 250 kg / 551lbs

Your skin can be badly damaged if the cushion is not used properly.

Cleaning your cushion

Washing instructions are on the label. We advise you to wash the outer cover and the mesh inner cover separately.

The outer cover can be machine washed on a 40°C wash cycle. Do not use bleach. Drip dry or tumble dry on a cool setting to prevent shrinkage.

The mesh inner cover with the Smart Cells inside can be machine washed on a 40°C wash cycle. There is no need to remove the Smart Cells. Ensure your washing machine drum can accommodate the cushion freely. The cushion does not absorb water and will not affect the maximum weight limit of the washing machine drum.

Alternatively the complete mesh inner cover cushion with the Smart Cells inside can be washed in a bath, wash basin or shower with household detergent and then air dried. Ensure the detergent is rinsed out thoroughly before.

Drip dry the cushion in the open air for 5-6 hours and ensure it is completely dry before using. Do not tumble dry.

Never use bleach, alcohol products or oil-based lotions to clean any parts of your cushion, as they can perish the materials used in construction.

Pressure relief

You may need to carry out pressure relief on this cushion. If you are not sure whether you need to do this, please contact the Pressure Clinic.

Pressure relief helps to keep the blood flowing in your seating area. This is necessary for healthy skin and helps prevent ulcers forming.

Pressure is relieved when the bony parts of your bottom are lifted clear from the cushion.

To do this you can lift your bottom off the seat or lean from side to side or forward and then back.

If possible relieve the pressure every 20 minutes for 20 seconds.

Skin

You should check your skin for any skin damage before getting into your wheelchair and on going back to bed. When in bed, if you have any red or pink marks on your skin, you will need to relieve pressure from the area until the mark has completely faded. If the mark is still there after 30 minutes, please contact the Pressure Clinic for advice.

New cushions are firmer than older ones, so you need to check your skin as often as possible when you get a new one.

Life expectancy of the cushion and how to replace it

The Vicair Vector 02 cushion should last between 2 – 3 years, but this can vary depending on your weight and how active you are. The cushion is guaranteed for 2 years from manufacturing defects.

To repair or replace your cushion, contact your local wheelchair service or supplier.

How can the Pressure Clinic help?

We are available by telephone for advice, and you will also attend the Pressure Clinic during your outpatient appointment to see your consultant. Additional appointments can also be made for you to be seen in the Pressure Clinic should you so wish.

We can be contacted for addresses and telephone numbers of local wheelchair services, sales representatives for cushions, and for advice on any aspect of your pressure area care.

Pressure Clinic –  01722 429291

Please remember that this leaflet is only to be used as a guide and that each person needs to be individually assessed for a cushion. Once a cushion is prescribed it does not reduce the need for skin checking and continued assessment.