

# Venous Leg Ulcer

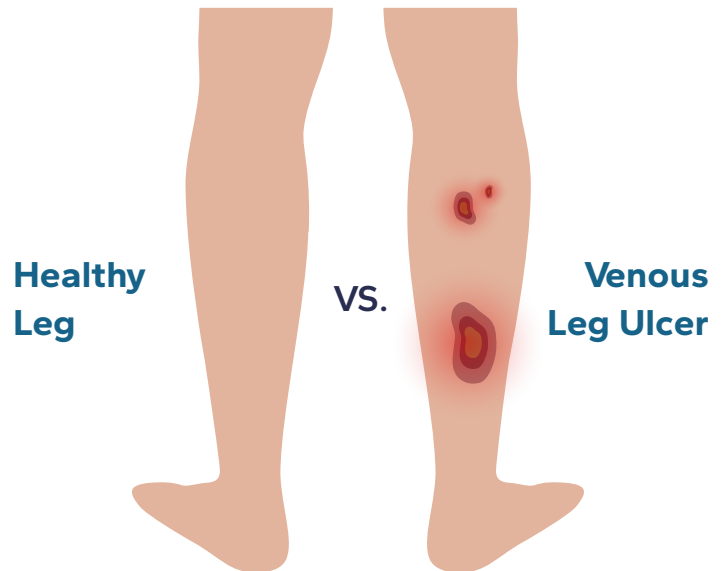


## What is a venous leg ulcer?

A venous leg ulcer is a wound or opening on the skin of the lower leg, ankle, or foot that doesn't heal due to vein disease, also called venous insufficiency or venous stasis.

## What causes venous insufficiency?

It tends to run in families, but you can be prone to developing venous insufficiency if you stand or sit for long periods, are pregnant, or gain excessive weight. Additionally, you are more susceptible if you have a history of blood clots in the affected leg or have had surgery, infection, or injury in that leg.



## How should you care for your venous leg ulcer?

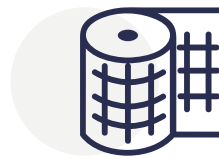
Venous leg ulcers need proper care and treatment to prevent infection and to help the ulcer close. We recommend the following ways to care for your venous leg ulcer:



**Keep the area clean**  
by gently washing with  
mild soap and water



**Apply treatment**  
to the wound to help  
keep the wound moist



**Cover the wound**  
with a dressing to  
help heal and protect  
from germs



**Wear compression**  
**wraps** or leg bandages  
to prevent blood from  
settling in legs

## What are compression wraps?

Compression wraps are garments or wraps used on the legs to reduce the amount of fluid that collects, helping the wound to heal. Some are washable and reusable, and others are used one time only and changed on a routine basis. Compression wraps are worn until the ulcer closes. When the ulcer closes, wearing compression stockings/hose lifelong helps prevent the ulcer from returning.

## How do you prevent a venous leg ulcer?

- Wear compression stockings/hose to decrease leg swelling
- Exercise by walking which helps move blood in the lower legs back to the heart and improve circulation
- Elevate your feet above the level of your heart for an hour each day for 2-3 sessions
- Clean and moisturize skin every day
- Maintain a healthy weight to support vein health and reduce strain on the leg veins
- Protect your legs and feet from scratches, rubbing, pressure, and burns

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## What activities I should avoid?



**Smoking** nicotine, tobacco, or similar products



**Exposing** your feet to extreme temperatures



**Picking or removing** scabs or dry skin

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## When should I call for help?

If you notice any of the following symptoms in or out of compression therapy:

- Leg, foot, or wound redness or warmth
- Swelling or pain
- Change in wound drainage, odor, or color
- Wet or soiled wraps
- Wound drainage outside of the wrap
- Wraps that fall down the leg or bunch
- Numbness or tingling in the leg or toes
- Toes that seem dark or turn blue
- Toes that are more swollen than usual
- Worsening pain in legs, feet, or toes

## Have Questions or Need Help?

Talk with your Clinical Care Team. **Call 1-833-ESPERTA (1-833-377-3782).**

If this is an emergency, go to your nearest hospital or call 911.

1. Association for Advancement of Wound Care (2022). [www.aawonline.org](http://www.aawonline.org)  
2. Bryant, R.A., & Nix, D.P. (2024). Acute and chronic wounds: current management concepts. 6th. edition. Elsevier.

3. Haesler, E. (2018). Evidence summary: venous leg ulcers: leg care: elevation and skin hygiene. Wound Practice and Research, 26(4), 214-216.  
4. Wound Reference Inc. (2024). <https://woundreference.com/app/>