1. What is a venous leg ulcer?

A leg ulcer is an area of damaged skin where the tissue underneath is exposed. Leg ulcers develop when there is poor blood circulation in the veins of your legs.

In healthy leg veins, blood pressure is kept at the right level by the valves in your veins. These valves prevent blood from flowing backwards and keep blood moving through your veins.

When the valves become damaged, the blood pressure in the veins of your legs will rise. This causes fluid to leak out of them leading to swelling, irritation of the skin, tenderness and eventually the formation of an ulcer.

2. Treatment for venous leg ulcers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compression bandaging</th>
<th>Manage Pain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compression bandaging</strong></td>
<td>You may or may not experience pain from your leg ulcer. If you do have pain and it prevents you from carrying out your normal daily activities, you should speak to your doctor or nurse about this.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Manage Pain</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Elevation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skin Moisturizer</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>When resting or sleeping, you should try to keep your ankles up higher than your heart. This allows the fluid to drain from your legs.</td>
<td>Dry scaly skin around the ulcer is common. It needs to be treated with a non-perfumed moisturizer to keep the skin from drying out too much. The wound care nurse will provide information on what you do for the skin on your leg.</td>
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3. Stop venous ulcers from coming back

Ulcers will heal, but poor circulation in your veins is a chronic condition – it won’t go away. Take care of yourself to stop ulcers coming back.

<table>
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<th>Compression stockings for life</th>
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<td><strong>You can help to prevent new ulcers by wearing compression stockings.</strong> Compression stockings apply constant pressure to your leg to improve the circulation through your veins.</td>
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Other

- wear loose fitting socks and good shoes
- keep your legs raised at night
- exercise regularly, for example, take a 30 minute walk each day
- avoid bumps to the legs
- keep your feet warm but avoid hot temperatures
- use a non-perfumed moisturiser on your legs
- examine your legs regularly for broken skin and swelling.

Notes & Questions:

4. When to get help

Tell your healthcare professional if you have any of the following problems:

- broken skin
- skin irritation or redness
- swelling of the leg
- pain becoming worse
- compression stocking becoming worn or torn or not fitting comfortably.