

# HEALERS' NOTES

## What are venous stasis ulcers?

These are wounds that occur between the ankle and the calf that are caused by the failure of the veins to move blood back to the heart normally.

Venous stasis disease is caused by damaged veins in the legs that allow fluid to pool in the lower leg. This causes the leg to swell and the skin to stretch like an oversized balloon. The skin will break open and a wound will form. Changes in skin color and texture may result.

### Causes of damaged veins:

- Injury to the veins from trauma, blood clots, or broken bones.
- Inherited weakness in the veins.
- Obesity
- Pregnancy
- Prolonged standing

### How should I care for my ulcer?

Special dressings are used to reduce swelling around your ulcer. If you have an Unna Boot or multi-layer compression dressing, we will change your dressings during your visit.

Wooster Community Hospital  
Hyperbaric Medicine and  
Wound Healing Center  
1761 Beall Avenue Annex  
Wooster, OH  
Phone: 330-263-8750  
Fax: 330-263-8752  
[www.woosterhospital.org](http://www.woosterhospital.org)

### Your Wound Healing Center is a resource for the care and maintenance of your wounds and feet:

You'll see trained healthcare professionals who will care for your wound. Your wound will be evaluated completely, including all diagnostic testing. Your treatment plan will be developed. You'll be given information about the treatment of your wound and how you can prevent new wounds.

### What will happen during my first visit?

- We'll examine you physically and ask about your personal and family medical history so that we can develop a plan of care just for you.
- We'll check your feet by testing for feeling, blood flow, and oxygen supply to them.
- We'll examine your wound.
- We might remove any dead tissue in and around the wound and apply a compression wrap, if needed.
- We'll teach you how to care for your wound at home.
- We'll schedule further testing, if it's needed.

### Support stockings

Purchase support stockings at medical supply stores. "Support stockings" sold other places or TED hose do not provide enough compression to prevent ulcers.

# HEALERS' NOTES

## Remember:

- Wear your support stockings and use your compression device, as instructed.
- Elevate your legs several times a day for 20 minutes.  
Putting your feet up on a chair or a coffee table is not high enough – your legs must be higher than your heart.
- Place pillows under your legs while sleeping to encourage fluid to drain from your legs.
- Protect your legs from injury.

## Never:

- Expose your legs to the sun.
- Soak in hot water. This can cause fluid retention.
- Sit or stand for long periods; walk around for a few minutes every hour.

## What about follow up visits?

Each time you come to the Wound Healing Center, we'll re-examine your wound to see what progress has been made. We'll review your test results and remove any dead tissue. We'll also answer any questions you have about how to care for your wound or what's going to happen next.

## How can you help?

- Exercise as directed and eat a well-balanced diet to keep your weight down.
- Practice good skin care:
  - Wash with mild soap and warm water
  - Apply moisturizers to prevent dryness
  - Shave only with an electric razor
- Put on your stockings before getting out of bed. They are easier to put on before legs swell.
- Replace compression stockings every three months or if they tear or run to maintain compression.

## Call the Wound Healing Center if you notice:

- Increased pain at the wound site.
- Redness or swelling around or spreading away from the wound.
- Foul odor coming from the wound.
- Any change in color or amount of drainage from the wound.
- Fever or chills; nausea or vomiting.
- If you have tingling in your toes or increased pain in your leg while you are wearing a compression wrap.