

## COMPRESSION STOCKING TO PREVENT VENOUS LEG ULCERS RETURNING

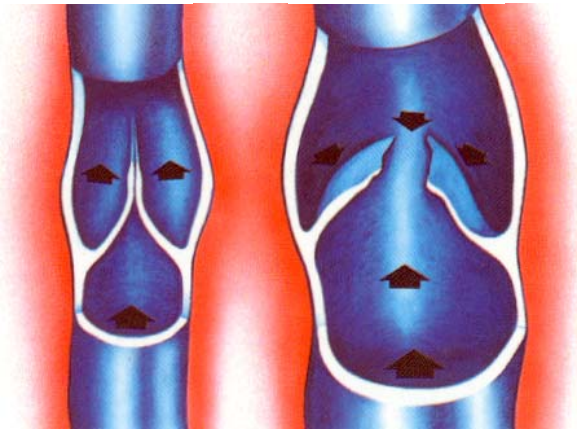
### What are venous leg ulcers?

Venous leg ulcers are caused by your veins not working properly to bring the blood from your legs back to your heart. This condition leads to increased swelling in your lower legs, which causes ulcers to form. To help your veins return your blood back to your heart and reduce this swelling, you must wear a compression stocking to prevent the ulcer returning.

***Compression stockings need to be very firm at all times. Please observe the following advice:***

Normal vein

Abnormal vein



**COMPRESSION STOCKINGS:** Once the ulcer has healed using bandages, you will be required to wear a compression stocking every day to prevent an ulcer from reoccurring (coming back). Your doctor or nurse will advise if you need to wear compression stocking on one leg or both legs.

### **TO HELP YOU WEAR YOUR COMPRESSION STOCKING EACH DAY PLEASE:**

- ❖ Shower of an evening immediately prior to going to bed (do not shower in the morning)
- ❖ Massage moisturiser (eg Sorbelene cream) into skin of legs (after shower)
- ❖ Sleep with legs elevated (raise foot end of bed slightly)
- ❖ Put compression stockings on before putting feet to floor in the morning (to prevent swelling). Note: keeping stocking by bedside may help with this
- ❖ Cover any open wounds (sores or ulcers) before putting compression stocking on
- ❖ If due to hot weather the compression stockings become unbearable to wear you may remove them ***BUT DO NOT*** walk around whilst compression stockings are off, as your legs will immediately swell making re-application difficult. ***Rest with your ankles higher than your hips & move feet back & forwards to improve circulation!***

***STOCKINGS MUST BE REPLACED EVERY 6 MONTHS and as per***

***manufacturers instructions!!!***

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**FITTING:** compression stockings can be very hard to put on. When you buy your stocking ask if there is something to help you 'put on' and 'take off' your compression stocking.

When applying compression stocking:

- ❖ Protect the stocking from jewellery and fingernails – by wearing cotton or rubber gloves
- ❖ When pulling up stocking do not over stretch the stocking. The stocking should start at the toes and stop just below the knee cap. ( do not fold or roll the top of the stocking over as this can stop the blood flow in the leg)
- ❖ Always wear stocking as the instructions say

### **CARE OF COMPRESSION STOCKING:**

- ❖ Do not use Vitamin E or petroleum based moisturisers
- ❖ Wash stocking by hand or gentle machine wash daily
- ❖ Use a mild laundry detergent
- ❖ Do not dry in direct sun – DO NOT use a clothes dryer
- ❖ Do not soak garments or use bleach
- ❖ Always lie stocking flat to dry (hanging may stretch stocking)



**Please remove the compression stocking and contact your GP, Community Health Nurse or hospital emergency department if you are concerned or notice any of the following:**

- ❖ Increasing pain in toes, foot or leg
- ❖ Blue discolouration of the toes
- ❖ Numbness, coldness or swelling of the toes, foot or leg
- ❖ Staining from a wound coming through the compression stocking