





## Venous Stasis Ulcers

### General Definition

**Venous Insufficiency (Stasis) Ulcers** are caused by problems in the veins of the lower leg. Leaky valves, obstructions, or regurgitation disturbs the flow of blood from the lower extremities back to the heart. The blood collects in the lower leg, damaging the tissues and causing wounds.



-  **Standard Treatment Protocols**
-  **Special Treatment Protocols**
-  **Dressings**
-  **Prevention**

- There are several causes for lower extremity ulcers. In order to provide proper treatment for the patient, it is important to determine the exact cause of the wounds involved. Incorrect diagnosis could lead to incorrect treatment which may ultimately harm the patient.

### Dressing Applications:

- ▶ [Treatment Application Guidelines - Venous Stasis Ulcers](#)
- ▶ [Venous Stasis Ulcer Characteristics](#)

**NOTE:** The procedures listed above are guidelines. They are not meant to replace any existing protocols or institutional policies. The dressings used on these pages may not be covered under current Medicare reimbursement guidelines. Contact your local Sales Representative for more information



## ***Venous Stasis Ulcers***

### **Standard Treatment Protocols:**

- Elevation of the leg
- Compression therapy (at least 30mm Hg compression at ankle):
  - Short stretch bandages
  - Therapeutic support stockings
  - Multiple layer bandage systems
  - Unna Boots
  - Compression pumps
- Topical therapy:
  - Absorb exudate and maintain a moist wound environment
- NOTE: Some patients may have mixed venous and arterial disease. Non-invasive vascular testing (ankle-brachial index) should be performed prior to the use of any compression therapy.

***Back to Top***



## ***Venous Stasis Ulcers***

### **Special Treatment Protocols:**

#### **Compression Therapy**

##### **(Used for Venous Ulcers only)**

1. Elastic Wrap or Multiple Layer Bandage Systems
  - a. Apply in the morning when edema (swelling) is absent or minimally present.
  - b. Best used when ulcers are small.
  - c. Highest pressure is applied at the foot and ankle and decreases as the wrap proceeds up the leg.
  - d. Provide at least 30mm Hg of pressure at the ankle.
  - e. Can be used in conjunction with advanced wound care dressings.
2. Compression Stockings
  - a. Apply before getting out of bed and wear all day.
  - b. Measure for stocking after edema has subsided.
  - c. Difficult for some elderly, disabled, and arthritic patients to apply.
3. Unna Boot
  - a. Apply in the morning when edema has subsided and wear for 4 - 7 days.
  - b. Best if used for ambulatory patients.
  - c. Can be used in conjunction with advanced wound care dressings.
  - d. Avoid use in patients with poor hygiene.
  - e. Once in place, cover with gauze or compression wrap.

**[Back to Top](#)**



## ***Venous Stasis Ulcers***

### **Dressings**

The principles of moist wound healing apply to the treatment of lower extremity ulcers. Dressings are used to control exudate and maintain a moist wound healing environment. Exercise caution when using occlusive dressings (such as hydrocolloids).

**[Back to Top](#)**



## ***Venous Stasis Ulcers***

### **Prevention:**

- Stop smoking
- Maintain or attain ideal body weight
- Control glucose levels
- Avoid crossing of the legs
- Wear well-fitting shoes (leather is best)
- Do not go barefoot
- Keep the feet clean and dry
- Avoid caffeine
- Inspect the feet daily, especially between the toes
- Seek professional care if unable to trim toenails, or if corns/callouses develop
- Use compression therapy as prescribed
- Avoid trauma
- Maintain clean, well-lubricated skin
- Optimize venous return
  - Elevate legs above the heart
  - Do not sit with legs crossed
  - Do not stand for long periods of time
  - Walk to tolerance several times per day
- Take medication as prescribed

**[Back to Top](#)**



## ***Venous Stasis Ulcers***

### **Treatment Application Guidelines - Venous Stasis Ulcers**

1. Choose the correct size of foam dressing, such as Kendall's CURAFOAM Plus dressing. Allow at least a 1" margin of intact skin under the dressing. If necessary, cut the dressing for a more secure fit.
2. After wound has been cleansed and debrided and you have opened the wound dressing package or packages, reglove.
3. Place the dressing over the wound.
4. If using a compression bandage system, apply the system directly over the CURAFOAM Plus as recommended by the product insert.

**[Back to Top](#)**



## ***Venous Stasis Ulcers***

### Venous Stasis Ulcer Characteristics

- Ruddy color base
- Surrounding skin is reddened or brown
- Shallow depth
- Irregular wound margins
- Moderate to heavy exudate
- Pitting or non-pitting edema
- Skin temperature is warm to the touch (normal)
- Granulation tissue is present
- Infection is not common
- Minimal pain (unless infected)
- Peripheral pulses are present and palpable
- Capillary refill is normal
- Usually located near the ankle or lower calf

**[Back to Top](#)**



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