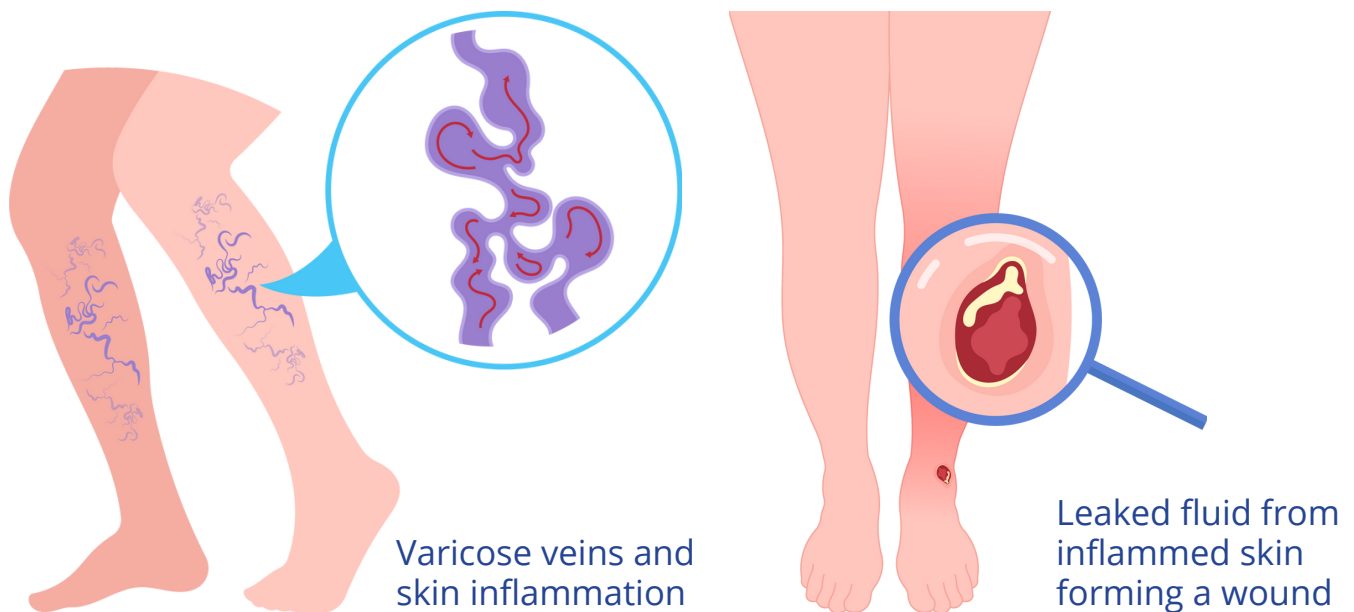


A Guide for Patients and Families

## Venous Leg Ulcer (VLC): Care of Compression Bandage

### What are Venous Leg Ulcers (VLC) ?

Venous leg ulcers usually occur in the lower part of the legs near the ankle. The ulcers develop in areas of sluggish circulation and are due to poor venous return of blood to the heart.



### What is Compression Bandage Therapy?

It is an application of a special, multiple layer bandage that provides a graduated sustained pressure to the leg to improve venous blood flow. It also reduces swelling of the leg. It is the best treatment to help a venous ulcer to heal.

## How does compression bandaging help with Venous Leg Ulcer?

1. Helps to heal leg ulcers by pushing the blood from your leg veins back to your heart.
2. Improves blood flow to your leg and ulcer.
3. Reduces swelling in your legs and removes fluid from your leg ulcer.
4. Gives the ulcer the oxygen and nutrients it needs to heal.
5. Speed up the ulcer healing rate.



## How is the multi-layer compression bandage applied?

It consists of 4 layers of bandage, namely soft wool (layer 1), soft crepe (layer 2), elastic compression bandage (layer 3) and a sticky extensible bandage (layer 4).

You may have to wear a bigger sized shoe on the leg where the multi-layer bandage is.





## What can I expect?

You may experience a feeling of “tightness” when wearing the multi-layer compression bandage.

This is normal but you should not feel more pain in your feet or legs compared to how you were experiencing before the compression bandage was applied.

## How to care for your compression bandage and manage Venous Leg Ulcer at home?

### DO's

- Keep the bandage on until the next review with the healthcare provider.
- Keep the bandage dry.
- Elevate your legs (above heart level) when resting to reduce swelling.
- Exercise regularly and continue your daily activities. Follow the steps below to strengthen your calf muscles:
  - Stand next to a chair/table with your feet flat on the ground.
  - Slowly tiptoe upwards (one foot at a time).
  - Hold for few seconds before lowering back to the ground.
- Stop smoking, this will promote wound healing.
- Eat a well-balanced diet with higher protein intake.
- Drink lots of non-caffeinated drinks (if your health condition permits).
- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Take your prescribed medications.



## Don'ts

**DO NOT** remove the compression bandage (contact your healthcare provider if you feel uncomfortable or if the bandage slips).

### Seek Medical Attention when you experience the following:

- Pain, numbness, tingling, burning feeling in your lower leg.
- Change of skin colour in toes (red, bluish, pale).
- Chills or fever with a temperature above 38°C.
- Wound with increased redness, pain, swelling, bleeding or pus.
- Pain or discomfort on your leg that persist even after rest, elevation and medication.



## How can I prevent recurring Venous Leg Ulcer?

### 1. General Measures

- Avoid smoking.
- Maintain a healthy and well balanced diet.
- Reduce and aim for your ideal body weight.

## 2. Good Skin Care

- Avoid injury to the leg such as scratching or exposure to very hot water.
- Maintain clean and well lubricated skin by using moisturisers regularly.
- Avoid products containing common allergens (perfumes, lanolin, etc).



## 3. Optimisation of venous return

- Wear compression stockings from morning to evening regularly for life.
- Practise leg and foot exercises when sitting or standing.
- Elevate legs above the heart when sitting and lying as this can help venous return and reduce pain and swelling.
- Avoid standing for long periods of time.
- Avoid sitting with your legs crossed.