Venous Leg Ulcers
Management
Management

Treat the underlying cause

Venous Insufficiency
Venous Insufficiency

Occurs when the valves that prevent backflow of blood fail.
So fix the valve problems with

COMPRESSION

• Compression therapy is contraindicated if Ankle Brachial Pressure Index < 0.7
Compression

• Supports veins and improves valve function
• Improves calf muscle effectiveness
• Reduces venous pressure
• Improves venous blood flow back to heart
Compression therapy
Venous Leg Ulcer Management

Summary of guidelines

• A Doppler reassessment should be undertaken:
  - whenever starting compression therapy
  - whenever changing type of compression therapy
  - whenever an ulcer deteriorates
  - for reassessment every 3 months

• Measure ulcer area to monitor progress every 4 weeks
Graduated multilayer high compression bandage systems should be the first line of treatment for uncomplicated venous leg ulcers.

Compression should be applied by a trained practitioner.

Four layer compression bandage systems result in a shorter time to healing than short-stretch bandage systems.

Protective padding should be used over bony prominences when applying compression.

*Products pictured are examples only and do not represent an endorsement of any company or particular device.*
Products that commonly cause skin sensitivity (e.g. lanolin, phenol alcohol, topical antibiotics) should not be used.

There is no evidence that the application of

- topical negative pressure
- laser treatment
- therapeutic ultrasound or
- electromagnetic therapy

speeds healing of venous leg ulcers.
Ulcer Management

- Treatment based on assessment findings
- Exudate level
- Pain
- Ulcer area
- Tissue type
Holistic and Patient Focused

- “whole” not “hole”
- individual risk factors
- individual circumstances
Further Information

Wounds Australia  www.woundsaustralia.com.au
International Wound Infection Institute  www.woundinfection-institute.com
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)  http://www.nice.org.uk/
EWMA Consensus Documents  http://ewma.org/english/position-documents.html
Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)  http://www.sign.ac.uk/
Wounds International  http://www.woundsinternational.com/clinical-guidelines
Wounds UK  http://www.wounds-uk.com/
The Joanna Briggs Institute  http://joannabriggs.org/

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References

AWMA, Clinical Practice Guidelines for Prevention and Management of Venous Leg Ulcers, 2011, AWMA: Barton. ACT.