

A man with glasses and a beard, wearing an orange t-shirt, blue shorts, blue socks, and blue sneakers with orange laces, stands with his hands on his hips against a blue background.

YOU  
ARE  
A  
FORCE  
OF  
NATURE

DEFY GRAVITY



**VENOUS LEG ULCERS  
AND YOU**



**DEFY  
WHAT  
HOLDS  
YOU  
DOWN**

## **Let's Power You Through VLU's!**

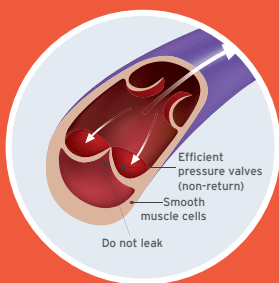
A VLU. You don't want it, but you have it, and you haven't got time for it. Work, play, sports, leisure, travel, pregnancy, life! You have places to go, people to see, so much to get done, and no patience for being a patient. You're not going to let this get you down or hold you back. We're here to help you power through!

## **WHAT IS IT?**

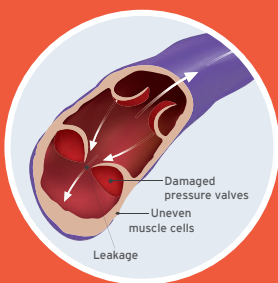
A VLU is a type of wound on the lower leg that often starts with a minor injury and breaks the skin. Instead of healing, a VLU worsens. Venous leg ulcers can develop quickly and, when left untreated, can last for years. It is important that they are properly diagnosed so that they can be treated correctly.

# DID YOU KNOW?

**EARLY SYMPTOMS OF CVD CAN INCLUDE "HEAVY", TIRED, OR ACHY LEGS, PROGRESSING TO SPIDER VEINS, VARICOSE VEINS, AND LEG SWELLING.**



**Normal Veins**



**Varicose Veins**

## WHAT CAUSES IT?

Venous leg ulcers occur due to a problem in the veins of the legs. Normally, leg veins help carry blood back up to the heart. In people with Chronic Venous Disease (CVD), the venous valves don't work well and leak, resulting in higher pressures in the leg veins. Symptoms of early CVD include legs that feel heavy, tired, or achy. As CVD progresses, spider veins and varicose veins start, and then leg swelling. In advanced CVD, skin color changes, more severe varicosities occur, and VLUs develop. Treating your legs with compression can help prevent the progression of CVD and ulcer recurrence. You have been diagnosed with a venous leg ulcer (VLU). This brochure provides some basic information about venous leg ulcers and answers some of the most frequently asked questions.

## **WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT?**

A venous leg ulcer may be painful, and you may also experience swollen and achy legs. If the wound becomes infected, the infection may cause an odor, and exudate may drain from the wound. The area around the wound may also be more tender and red. Call your doctor when you first notice the signs of a venous leg ulcer because you may be able to prevent the VLU from forming. If a VLU has formed, seek treatment right away, because new and smaller VLUs tend to heal faster than larger ones.

## **HOW CAN IT BE TREATED?**

Your wound care professional (WCP) will conduct a complete history and examination of your leg and wound to make sure the diagnosis is correct, as well as to help determine the best way of healing your ulceration and preventing recurrence. The majority of venous leg ulcers are treated by compression therapy which improves the blood flow up the leg. This usually includes the application of wound dressings and compression bandages, which are changed once or twice a week. Your wound care professional may select a combination of products to create the ideal conditions within the wound to promote quick, effective healing.

## **HOW QUICKLY WILL IT HEAL?**

Adherence to your physician's treatment for your VLU will have a critical impact on how long it takes to heal the wound. Moist wound dressings and compression are the standard treatment. Healing time varies on VLU severity and other medical conditions.



# DID YOU KNOW ?

**GRADIENT COMPRESSION  
THERAPY HELPS TO IMPROVE  
THE FLOW OF BLOOD UP  
THE LEG WHILE HELPING  
TO RESTORE THE FLOW  
OF VENOUS BLOOD BACK  
TOWARDS THE HEART.**

## HOW DO I PREVENT MORE VLU'S?

Once the VLU has healed, gradient compression therapy is essential to prevent the VLU from recurring. Gradient compression therapy is commonly provided by wearing compression stockings that apply a measured compression to your leg - with the most pressure at the ankle and less as you move up the leg. This helps prevent the blood from pooling in your veins and helps restore the flow of venous blood back towards the heart. Compression is essential to heal a VLU, as well as to prevent recurrence.





# DID YOU KNOW ?

There are many things you can do to help reduce the risk of a VLU:

- ✓ Wear your compression stockings daily.
- ✓ Eat a healthy balanced diet with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- ✓ Lose weight if you are overweight. Weight puts more strain on your veins.
- ✓ Exercise regularly to help build calf muscle and improve blood flow through veins.
- ✓ Unable to walk? Try moving your feet up and down while sitting or lying down.
- ✓ Elevate your leg when sitting on a chair or sofa.
- ✓ If you smoke, stop. It damages arteries supplying blood and oxygen to your legs. Additionally, smoking delays the wound healing process.
- ✓ Regularly wash and lotion your legs - dry skin is more easily damaged.
- ✓ Call your doctor if you damage your skin and you have Chronic Venous Disease. Delaying treatment can increase your risk of developing a VLU.



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