hosiery & wound care

Answers at Walgreens™
Answers begin here with information on hosiery and wound care.

Venous disorders are an extremely common occurrence, just like high blood pressure, heart disease or diabetes, and need to be taken just as seriously. Although venous disorders are complex medical conditions, this brochure can help you understand what causes them and how they can be managed.

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These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. This brochure is meant to act as a guide. It is not a substitute for medical advice.
What causes vein problems?
Problems occur when a valve no longer closes properly, allowing blood to flow backward in the vein. This puts pressure on the valves below and they may also weaken. When valves are damaged, blood flow back to the heart is reduced and other complications can develop.

Common vein problems.

Pooling — A damaged or poorly closing valve in a vein of the leg allows blood to flow backward, which can cause blood to collect. This pooling results in swelling, especially near the ankles and calves.

Enlarged veins — When a valve is damaged or missing, the backup of blood results in higher pressure in the veins below. This may strain the walls of the vein, causing them to enlarge and even twist.

Blood clots — Clots may be caused by sluggish blood flow, injury to a vein or abnormal blood clotting factors. They may completely or partially block the flow of blood.

Chronic Venous Insufficiency (CVI)
CVI results from damaged valves in the veins, causing blood to pool in the leg, which leads to swelling and discomfort. This can also lead to skin damage and leg ulcers.

The symptoms of CVI are:

- Leg pain
- Varicose veins
- Discoloration
- Hardening of the skin or leg ulcers
What is edema?
Swelling, also referred to as edema, occurs due to buildup of fluid in the body’s tissues, often in the lower leg and ankle. Prolonged swelling should not be ignored, as it may be a sign of serious disease or CVI.

Symptoms of edema
• Enlarged ankles and calves
• Discomfort or tired legs
• Decreased skin elasticity

Varicose Veins:
Varicose veins can be mild or severe and are caused from a backflow or pooling of blood in a damaged vein. They may also occur as a result of heredity or develop during pregnancy.

Symptoms of varicose veins
• Bulging veins
• Aching and discomfort in the leg
• Leg heaviness and fatigue
• Inflammation
What is gradient compression therapy?
Gradient compression therapy helps manage and prevent the progression of various vein-related diseases by applying a measured amount of compression to your leg. The highest amount of pressure is applied to the ankle and gradually decreases up the length of the stocking.

Cause of venous disorders
Venous disorders can be caused by a number of things, including:

- Heredity
- Lack of exercise
- Age
- Tightly fitting clothing
- High-heeled shoes
- Obesity
- Alcohol consumption during flight
- Hot baths and excessive exposure to the sun
- Dehydration
- Pregnancy

I have a venous condition. How can I encourage blood flow?

- Elevate legs
- Exercise daily
- Use gradient compression therapy daily
Wound Care

Be sure to properly control the bleeding before treating a wound. To stop the bleeding, cover the wound with sterile gauze or, depending on the size of the wound, an adhesive bandage and then apply pressure. Once the bleeding is controlled, clean with mild soap and water or antiseptic wash.

How long should I keep the wound covered?

Apply a bandage as soon as possible and keep the wound covered until it is completely healed. Check the wound regularly and change bandages as needed to help keep the wound as clean as possible.

How can I get the best results out of my gradient compression stockings?

- Wear your gradient compression stockings every day.
- Put hosiery on first thing in the morning.
- Keep your legs and feet warm to promote good circulation.
- Keep your skin in good condition by applying non-oily lotion at bedtime.
- Get up and stretch, walk or move your feet for five minutes every hour when traveling.
- Wash with warm water, mild soap or detergent, rinse well, then hang or lay flat to dry.
- Invest in a few pairs so you can wear one, have one in the laundry and one in the drawer.
Does a wound heal better with or without a bandage?

Clinical studies have shown that covering a wound with an adhesive bandage, or first aid cover, helps speed healing compared to an uncovered wound. Although scabs are nature’s way of protecting the body, they may impede healing by creating a barrier between healthy skin cells. These cells then have to work their way under the scab in order to form new tissue and heal. Additionally, scabs can be scratched or torn, causing reinjury that prolongs healing.

When should I use a first aid antibiotic?

You should use a first aid antibiotic any time you have a minor cut or scrape to help prevent infection, but first check the label to make sure you are not allergic to any of the ingredients. If you have a deep or puncture wound, animal bite, burn or other serious wound, ask your doctor for advice before using any over-the-counter first aid antibiotic.
Do first aid antibiotics expire?
Yes, be sure to check the expiration date on any first aid antibiotic and discard expired products. Using products before the expiration date ensures that you are getting the infection protection benefits that over-the-counter first aid antibiotics provide.

Are all gauze pads the same?
There is a significant difference among the gauze pads available today, with the two most important attributes being thickness and absorbency. Thicker products provide better cushioning and protection from bumping, which may reinjure the wound. Products with higher absorbency require less frequent changes. In addition, non-stick pads are a special type of gauze that do not stick to wounds, which helps to avoid reinjuring the wound when removed.
We’re here to help.

Walgreens pharmacists can help determine the best products for your hosiery & wound care needs. To consult with one of our knowledgeable pharmacists, visit us in store or chat live at Walgreens.com.

For an expanded selection of home medical products, visit Walgreens.com/HomeMedical.

Select products are eligible for FREE standard shipping and/or flexible spending reimbursement.

For help placing your order, please visit the pharmacy.