



KNOW YOUR LEGS

VENOUS LEG ULCER
Why compression is essential to heal

**LEGS
GO!** Leg Ulcer
Patient Program

You have been diagnosed with **a leg ulcer**

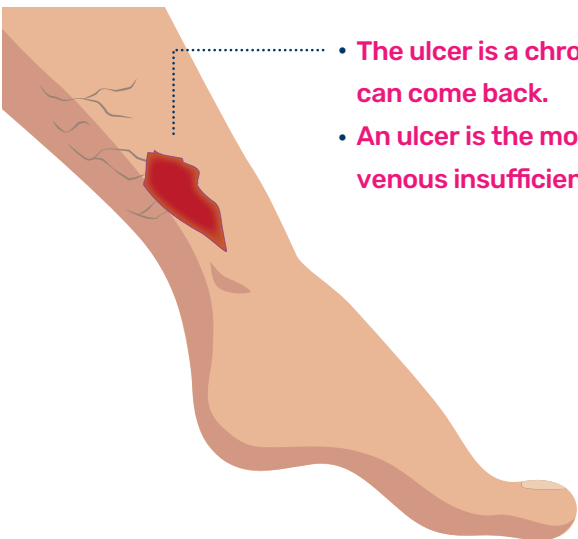
This guide will help you better understand your disease and how to manage it so you can:

- ▶ **Better communicate with your care providers.**
- ▶ **Be an actor of your healing.**

What is a **venous leg ulcer**?

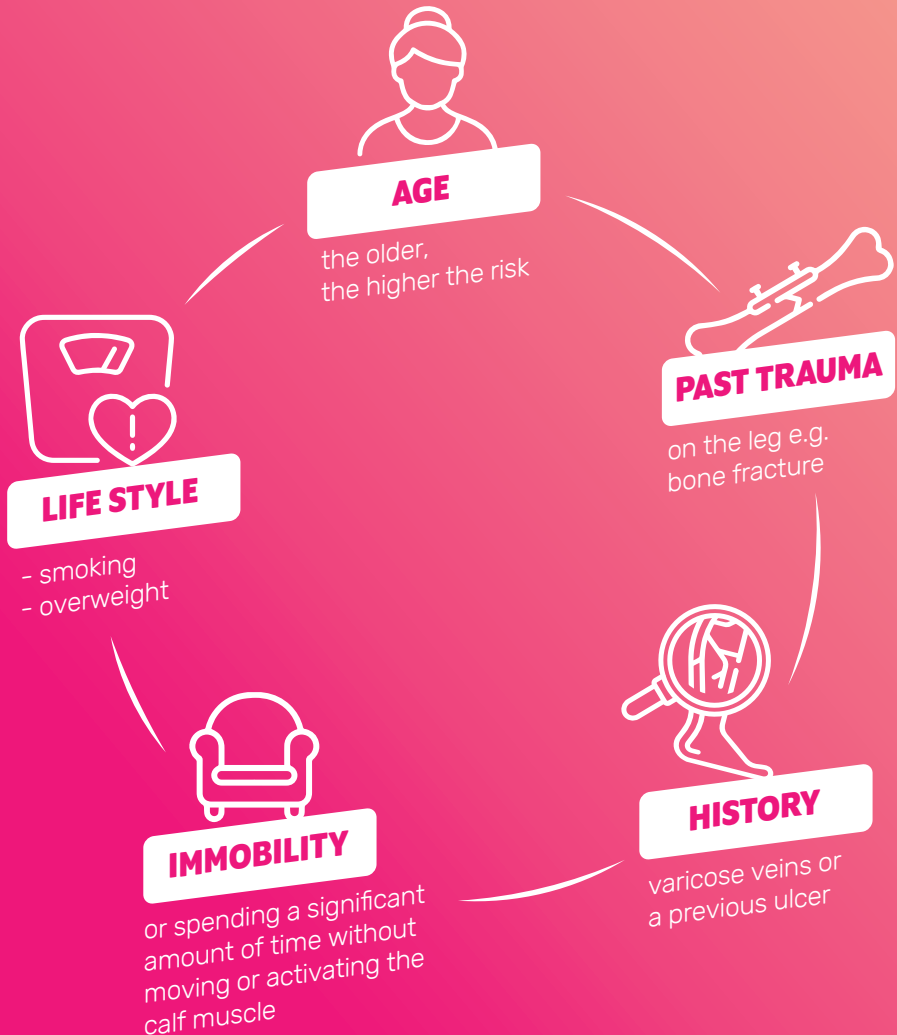
When you suffer from chronic venous insufficiency, a wound can form at the slightest trauma such as an itch or even spontaneously. This wound can take up to several months to heal.

- ▶ **An ulcer is the final stage of chronic venous insufficiency.**
- ▶ **As a chronic condition, once you have had a venous leg ulcer, you are at risk of it coming back.**



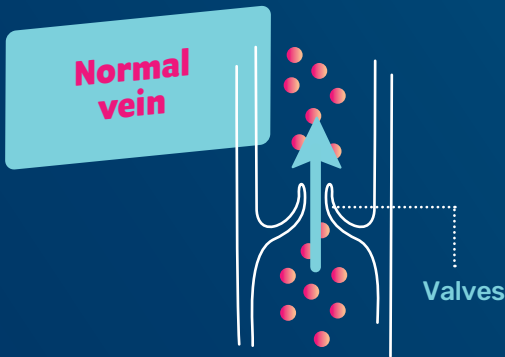
- **The ulcer is a chronic wound of the leg that can come back.**
- **An ulcer is the most severe stage of chronic venous insufficiency.**

What can contribute to an ulcer forming on my leg?

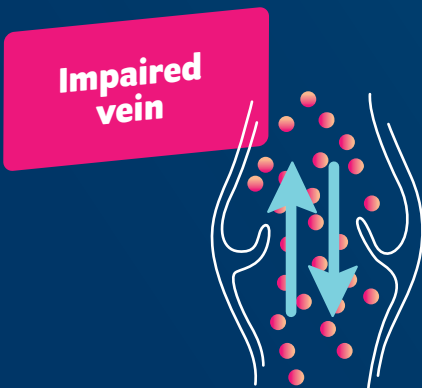


How do I get a a venous leg ulcer?

A venous ulcer is the final stage of chronic venous insufficiency. It can be linked to the presence of varicose veins or phlebitis. In any case, venous return to the heart is impaired.



Veins allow the blood to flow back to the heart. When you are walking or exercising, the calf muscles compress the veins to pump blood in the right direction. The valves keep blood from flowing back down with gravity.



In venous disease, the valves no longer function properly and allow blood to flow back down. The blood then stagnates in the veins of the legs. The resulting hypertension damages surrounding skin that will then fill with fluid: this is the edema. The skin is no longer correctly oxygenated and nourished and becomes very fragile. A wound can form at the slightest trauma, such as an itch or even spontaneously. This wound, or ulcer, may have difficulty healing.

Why is compression necessary to heal your leg ulcer?

- ▶ A venous leg ulcer can only heal with appropriate compression that improves venous return.
- ▶ The recommended treatment is **continuous compression**.



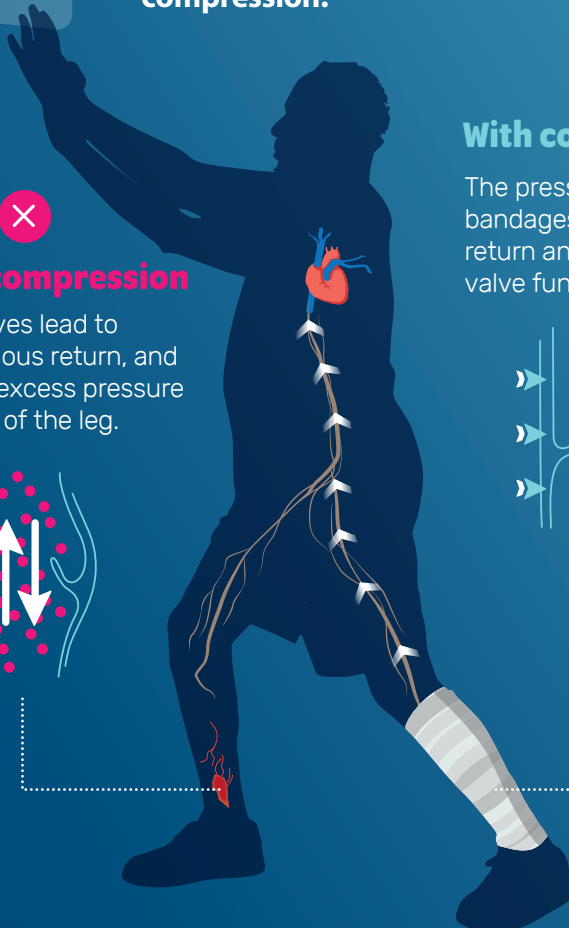
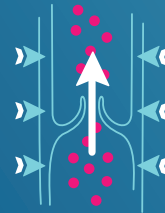
Without compression

Impaired valves lead to impaired venous return, and therefore to excess pressure in the valves of the leg.



With compression

The pressure applied by the bandages improves venous return and improves in valve function.



What should I do with my compression bandages?

- ▶ I should not take off or adjust the way the bandages are applied. This would impact the therapeutic pressure which can slow down the process.
- ▶ I should wear my bandages continuously.
- ▶ Observing the treatment is key to my healing.

Caution:

Contact your healthcare provider as soon as possible if experiencing the following.

- Pins & needle sensation at the toes
- Cramps
- Discoloration of the toes
- Excessive cold sensation in the leg
- Severe pain
- Slipped or misplaced bandage
- Unusual bloating of the toes or knees
- Unusual itchiness in the leg
- Redness on skin or malodor

It might be necessary remove the bandages if your care provider deems it necessary.



**If in doubt, contact a
healthcare professional**



How can I help my ulcer heal?



WALK IF YOU CAN

Walking regularly is the best way to stimulate muscle pump and allow the blood to flow back to your heart



WEAR COMFORTABLE SHOES



ADOPT A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

A healthy diet will give your body the nutrients it needs to help your ulcer heal





**WIGGLE
YOUR TOES**

While lying down
or sitting



**POINT YOUR TOES UPWARDS
AND DOWNWARDS**

While lying down or sitting



**ELEVATE
YOUR FEET**

While lying down or sitting,
elevate your legs above hip
level to aid venous return



**ROTATE
YOUR ANKLE**

In both directions





Healing your ulcer: physical exercise and compression

WHY ARE COMPRESSION BANDAGES RECOMMENDED TO HEAL?

- ▶ An ulcer cannot heal without adequate compression to promote venous return.
- ▶ That is why continuous compression is recommended to heal your ulcer.

WHY IS PHYSICAL EXERCISE SO IMPORTANT TO HEAL AN ULCER?

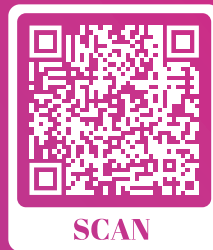
- ▶ Our muscles are the natural compression of our venous system, it is therefore primordial to continue stimulating them.
- ▶ Studies show that physical exercise promotes healing giving you the power to play a role in your healing!

**COMPRESS,
EXERCISE
& HEAL!**





Scan the QR code for exercises to promote healing*



Scan the QR code to learn more about your venous leg ulcer

*Always contact your healthcare professional before starting an exercise routine.

LEGS GO!

Leg Ulcer Patient Program

UM - FRS - 01/2022