

# CHRONIC VENOUS INSUFFICIENCY: GLOSSARY OF USEFUL WOUND CARE TERMS

<b>ABPI Assessment</b>	ABPI assessment evaluates vessel competency by measuring the blood pressure at the ankle and comparing it to that in the arm.
<b>Ankle Flare</b>	The development of spider veins on the ankle. They resemble a blue and red spider web on the skin. Ankle flares are associated with varicose veins and are indicative of issues with blood flow in the lower limbs.
<b>Antibiotics</b>	Antibiotics are drugs used to treat bacterial infections. Antibiotics work by destroying or preventing the spread of bacteria.
<b>Atrophie Blanche</b>	Atrophie blanche is scarring caused by a poorly healed ulcer.
<b>Carbon Dressing</b>	Carbon dressings are dressings that contain an activated charcoal layer and are designed to absorb foul and unpleasant odours from wounds.
<b>CEAP Classification</b>	The CEAP classification is used to chronicle the stages of chronic venous insufficiency.
<b>Cellulitis</b>	Cellulitis is a bacterial infection that develops under the skin. It can occur anywhere on the body, but it is most common on the lower legs.
<b>Chronic Oedema</b>	Oedema is the build-up of fluid in the body's tissues. Oedema is considered chronic if it lasts for more than 3 months. It is usually concentrated in one region of the body.
<b>Chronic Venous Insufficiency</b>	Compression therapy improves blood flow through the veins by applying pressure to the lower leg. Compression therapy can be done by a healthcare professional

bandaging the leg. Compression can also be applied by wearing compression garments (i.e., socks and tights). The gold standard treatment for oedema is compression therapy. It is also very useful for wound and ulcer prevention.

### **Compression Therapy**

The most effective treatment for oedema and venous leg ulceration is compression therapy. It improves circulation by applying pressure to the lower leg and enabling blood and fluid to flow upwards to prevent pooling. Compression therapy bandaging should be done by a healthcare provider.

Compression garments (i.e., stockings) can also be worn daily as a preventative measure.

### **Debridement**

The process by which necrotic (dead) tissue is removed from within or around the wound bed to assist wound healing. Debridement reduces the risk of infection, malodour, and delayed wound healing.

### **Deep Vein Thrombosis**

Deep vein thrombosis is a blood clot in the vein. These blood clots are usually found in the legs.

### **Dermatitis**

Dermatitis is a term for skin irritation. Symptoms can include itchiness, dryness, redness, bumpy skin, and flakiness.

### **Dermis**

The dermis is the middle layer of the skin. It sits between the epidermis and the hypodermis. The dermis is the thickest layer of the skin. It is composed of elastic and fibrous tissue.

### **Doppler Ultrasound**

A Doppler ultrasound is a test that can be used to determine the flow of blood through the vessels using high-frequency sound waves.

### **Elevation**

Elevation is a critical component of both oedema and venous leg ulcer management. Elevating the limbs above heart level improves circulation and prevents fluid from accumulating in the lower limbs.

<b>Epidermis</b>	The epidermis is the top layer of the skin. It is located above the dermis and the hypodermis.
<b>Exudate</b>	Exudate is a fluid that leaks out of wounds. It is made up of water, electrolytes, nutrients, enzymes, and proteins. Exudate is sometimes known as pus (see Pus).
<b>Gaiter Area</b>	The area of the lower limbs between the top of the calf and the ankle.
<b>Haemosiderin Staining</b>	Discolouration caused by the leaking of red blood cells from the capillaries into the tissue.
<b>Hyperkeratosis</b>	Hyperkeratosis is the abnormal thickening of the stratum corneum. This happens because of a build-up of keratin-producing cells. Hyperkeratosis is localised to the lower limbs, which is why it is common among lymphoedema and chronic venous insufficiency patients.
<b>Infection</b>	A reaction caused by bacteria and viruses invading the body.
<b>Leg Ulcer</b>	Leg ulcers are defined as a break in the skin that takes more than 4 to 6 weeks to heal. Leg ulcers are usually caused by other conditions such as chronic venous insufficiency and arterial disease.
<b>Maceration</b>	Maceration is the softening and breaking down of the skin because of prolonged exposure to moisture.
<b>Malodour</b>	Malodour is defined as an unpleasant smell. Wound malodour can be a sign of compromised wound healing. It can be problematic for both healthcare providers and patients. It can lead to discomfort, stress, isolation, and embarrassment.
<b>Periwound</b>	The periwound is defined as the skin immediately surrounding the wound.
<b>Phlebectomy</b>	A procedure to remove varicose veins. It is considered minimally invasive.

<b>Pus</b>	Pus is a fluid that leaks out of wounds. Pus is composed of water, proteins, electrolytes, nutrients, and enzymes. Pus is sometimes known as exudate (see Exudate).
<b>Slough</b>	Slough is regarded as a by-product of inflammation. Slough is made up of skin cells, fibrin, microorganisms, and protein. Slough is usually off-white or yellow in colour. The presence of slough can increase the risk of infection, maceration, and malodour.
<b>Superabsorbent Dressing</b>	Superabsorbent dressings absorb and retain large volumes of fluid. Many superabsorbent dressings are developed to keep fluid away from the wound to maintain adequate moisture balance.
<b>Varicose Veins</b>	Varicose veins are swollen and enlarged veins. They are usually found on the lower limbs and are blue or purple in colour.
<b>Vein Ablation</b>	The process of cauterising varicose veins until they close. It is minimally invasive and does not generally leave scars.
<b>Venous Disease</b>	Venous disease is another term for chronic venous insufficiency.
<b>Venous Leg Ulcer</b>	Venous leg ulcers are caused by chronic venous insufficiency. They are chronic wounds that develop on the gaiter area of the lower limbs. They are the most common type of leg ulcer, accounting for more than 60% of all cases.
<b>Venous Reflux</b>	The name for the backflow of blood due to incompetent valves. This typically occurs when sitting or standing.

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