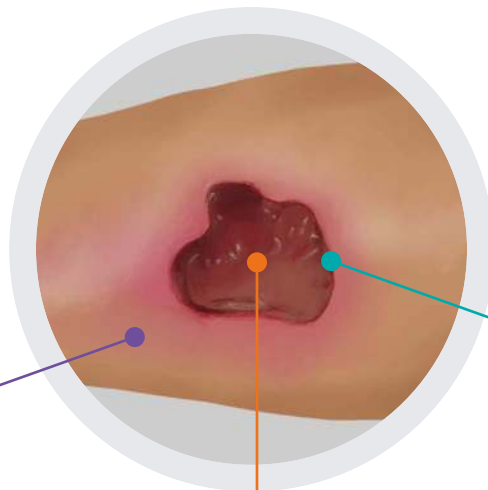


Wound assessment and dressing choice for venous ulcers

Dressings should be selected based on the properties of the wound and surrounding skin. Consider the wound location, size, depth, exudate level, and presence of infections. Dressings can help symptom control and promote healing. However, compression therapy remains the cornerstone of treatment.



Debridement methods



Surgical or sharp



Autolytic with hydrocolloid, hydrogels or honey dressings



Larvae

Surrounding skin

Dry or flaky

Rehydrate, using exfoliants and emollients. Consider a moisture-donating or moisture-retaining dressing

Macerated or oedematous

Choose a dressing capable of managing exudate and change frequently

Callus or hyperkeratotic skin

Debridement is required to remove non-viable or unhealthy tissue

Evidence of cellulitis

Treat with systemic antibiotics

Active eczema

Topical steroids and emollients as required
Consider whether the dressing could be causing irritation or allergy

Wound bed

Dry or flaky

Macerated or oedematous

Non-viable, necrotic tissue or slough

Debridement is required to remove non-viable or unhealthy tissue

Local infection or biofilm suspected

Treat with antimicrobial dressing or topical antiseptic preparation

Abnormal inflammation

Consider debridement or protease modulating matrix dressings

Wound edge

Dry or flaky

Macerated or oedematous

Excessive necrotic skin or slough

Raised or rolled edge

Biopsy recommended

Epidermal margin not advancing

Reassess underlying diagnosis

Choice of dressing

Exudate level



Dry



Low



Moderate



High

Flat wounds

Shallow wounds

Deep wounds

Hydrogel sheets 

Soft polymer dressings 

Hydrocolloid fibrous 

Alginates 

Low-adherent dressings 

Semipermeable films 

Hydrocolloid sheets 

Foam dressings 

Chronic wound with prolonged inflammatory phase

Protease modulating matrix dressings

Locally infected wounds

Many kinds of dressing are available impregnated with antimicrobial agents, such as:

Iodine

Chlorhexidine

Silver

Honey

Dialkylcarbonyl chloride

Polyhexamethylene biguanide (PHMB)