

[Chronic vein disease](#) is disease of the veins (vessels that carry blood back to the heart) that usually affects the legs. Chronic vein disease usually gets worse over time and can cause swelling, pain, and ulcers (sores) on the legs that make walking and performing everyday tasks difficult.

The goals of treatment for chronic vein disease are to make your symptoms more manageable and prevent complications such as leg sores and blood clots ([deep vein thrombosis](#)).

Treatment for chronic vein disease consists of:

- [Healthy lifestyle changes](#) and risk factor control
- [Compression therapy](#)
- [Proper skin care](#)
- [Procedures](#) to remove or open diseased veins

Lifestyle Changes and Risk Factor Control

If your vein disease is mild or in the early stages, behavioral and lifestyle changes may be enough to control your symptoms. As with all forms of heart and blood vessel disease, you need to get your risk factors under control. Managing other medical conditions that contribute to blood flow problems will improve circulation in your legs and ease the pressure on your veins, relieving or preventing symptoms, slowing the progression of the disease, and reducing the risk of blood clots.

All women with chronic vein disease should be sure to:

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** If you are [overweight or obese](#) , work with your doctor to decide on a weight loss plan and set reasonable goals.

- **Get regular exercise** – at least 30 minutes a day most days of the week

- **Control high blood pressure.** Make sure you know your blood pressure numbers and work with your doctor to get them to a healthy level. For most women, a blood pressure treatment plan will include dietary changes (such as the

[ASH diet](#)

) and

[D](#)

[blood pressure medication](#)

- If you smoke, get the help you need to [quit smoking](#) .

If you have chronic vein disease, you are also at increased risk for blood clots in the veins of the legs ([deep vein thrombosis](#)) that can travel to the lungs, causing a potentially deadly pulmonary embolism. See [Preventing DVT: The Basics](#) for steps you can take to prevent blood clots.

Compression Therapy

Compression therapy using a special type of sock called [compression stockings](#) is the first choice treatment for chronic vein disease. For many women, compression stockings can restore normal blood flow in the leg veins without the risks of more invasive treatments. Compression stockings can relieve symptoms such as aching, heaviness, swelling, and pain, and prevent varicose veins from getting worse. They also help prevent and heal ulcers (sores) on the legs and reduce the risk of blood clots.

If compression stockings are not enough to control your symptoms, you may need a stronger form of compression therapy. [Intermittent Pneumatic Compression](#) (IPC) uses a pump machine and inflatable leggings to provide pulsing pressure that pushes blood through the veins, relieving vein disease symptoms and preventing skin ulcers or helping them heal.

Skin Care

Because women with chronic vein disease often suffer from skin problems such as rashes and painful ulcers (sores) on the legs, proper skin care is extremely important. Ask your doctor what you can do to reduce your risk of skin problems. Be sure to keep the skin on your legs well moisturized and check your legs daily for signs of problems such as a rash, itchy or scaly skin, or open wounds. If you notice any of these signs, contact your doctor immediately. Steroid creams, medication, and bandages can help them heal and prevent ulcers from spreading or becoming infected.

See [Living with Vein Disease](#) for more tips on preventing skin problems and other complications of vein disease.

Procedures to Treat Chronic Vein Disease

For women with the early stages of vein disease, basic treatment with lifestyle changes and graduated compression stockings may be enough to control your symptoms. However, you may need a procedure to relieve your symptoms and prevent serious complications such as blood clots (deep vein thrombosis) if you have:

- Severe varicose veins
- Disease in the deep veins of the legs
- Non-healing sores

Most procedures involve injections or surgery to seal off and close the diseased vein, or remove it altogether. This prevents blood from flowing backwards and pooling in the legs. Over time, your body will turn the closed vein into scar tissue, and nearby veins will take over the blood flow. In rare cases, you may have a procedure to open a blocked vein that is preventing blood from flowing back to the heart, or to repair damaged valves in the veins. See [Procedures to Treat Chronic Vein Disease](#) to learn more about your treatment options.

Learn More:

- See [Chronic Vein Disease](#) to learn about the causes of chronic vein disease and who is at risk
- See [Signs of Chronic Vein Disease](#) to learn how to recognize varicose veins and when you should seek treatment
- See [Chronic Vein Disease Diagnosis](#) to learn about tests used to diagnose chronic vein disease and who should have them

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