

# Leg ulcer - venous

## Prevention

Whether or not you have had a venous leg ulcer before, there are a number of steps that you can take in order to lower your risks of developing one. These are detailed below.

- **Lose weight** (if you are overweight) or obese (see the 'related articles' section if you are unsure). Losing weight can help to prevent venous leg ulcers because excess weight contributes to high blood pressure, as well as being beneficial to your overall health.
- **Eat a healthy, balanced diet** in order to help you maintain a healthy weight.
- **Do not drink an excessive amount of alcohol.** The Department of Health recommends that men should drink no more than 3-4 units of alcohol a day, and women should drink no more than 2-3 units of alcohol a day. One unit is equivalent to half a pint of normal strength beer, a small glass of wine, or a pub measure (25ml) of spirits.
- **Give up smoking** (if you smoke). Cigarettes contain nicotine, which narrows your veins and arteries and damages your blood circulation, making venous leg ulcers more likely to develop.
- **Use an emollient** (moisturiser) regularly on your legs, particularly if you have had a previous venous leg ulcer. You can use it as often as you like as it is impossible to use too much. The motion of rubbing the emollient into your skin helps to boost your circulation.
- **Examine your legs regularly** for broken skin, blisters, swelling, and redness. Treating minor skin ailments as and when they occur may help to prevent a venous leg ulcer developing.
- **Take care not to injure your legs** in any way, and try to wear comfortable, well-fitting shoes as often as possible.