

Stasis Dermatitis

What is Stasis Dermatitis?

Chronic swelling of the lower legs which may be accompanied by cycles of scratching, weeping, crusting, scaling or inflammation.

What causes Stasis Dermatitis?

Incompetent valves in the leg veins causing blood and fluid to backflow leading to skin inflammation and discoloration.

How is Stasis Dermatitis Treated?

The venous backflow is treated with elevation of the legs, and with compression therapy (compression stockings). The compression stockings should fit very tight, and may feel like they are too small, however this level of compression is required to reverse the venous backflow. Topical moisturizers and cortisone creams may be applied as needed for itchy symptoms.

What are the Complications of Stasis Dermatitis?

When stasis dermatitis is left untreated, it may slowly progress and expand affecting a larger surface area. The area may become secondarily infected with bacteria from scratching or in open weeping areas. Ulcerations, long-term antibiotics, wound care management, and unna boots may need to be applied and changed weekly for long-term management. A more serious complication may develop called lipodermatosclerosis, where patients develop reddish, firm plaques with underlying scarring of the skin from chronic venous insufficiency. To avoid the possible complications of stasis dermatitis, utilize compression stockings and elevate your legs whenever possible.

If you have any further questions please call the Dermatology Clinic of Idaho at (208) 939-4599 or (208) 376-4776