STASIS DERMATITIS
INFORMATION, PREVENTION, AND TREATMENT

WHAT IS STASIS DERMATITIS?

DEFINITION:

Stasis dermatitis is an inflammatory skin condition commonly seen in the lower legs, caused by the excess pooling of blood in the veins.

This condition typically develops in people with poor circulation. The valves in the veins of the legs have one-way valves that play a crucial role in circulating blood through the extremities and back to the heart. With age and/or conditions such as congestive heart failure these valves can weaken and not work as effectively. The poor movement of blood from the legs up to the rest of the body results in blood pooling in the lower extremities. Initially this excess blood manifests as leg swelling and what are known as varicose veins. With time, the pooled blood causes the overlying skin to become dry, itchy, and irritated, making it susceptible to complications such as ulcers and skin infections.

WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS?

- Age (commonly >50 years old)
- Gender: women slightly more affected
- Medical History:
  - Varicose Veins
  - High Blood Pressure
  - Previous Blood Clot (including deep vein thrombosis)
  - Many pregnancies
  - Heart condition
  - Kidney failure
- Lifestyle:
  - Prolonged standing/sitting
  - Little/no exercise
  - Excess body fat

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Heaviness or aching with prolonged standing/walking
- Swelling commonly at the end of the day
- Itchy, dry skin
- Darker colored skin (red or violet)
- Scaling skin

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

- Compression stockings/dressings
- Elevate legs every 2 hours
- Skin care as needed for pain/redness/swelling such as corticosteroids
WHEN SHOULD I CONTACT MY HEALTHCARE PROVIDER?
Contact your provider if you notice any of the following:
- Increased pain
- Increased redness
- Any drainage
- Open-wound or ulcer

TIPS TO MANAGE YOUR STASIS DERMATITIS
- Exercise!
- Elevate your legs every 2 hours for 15 minutes
- Take breaks while walking/standing for prolonged time periods
- Wear loose-fitting cotton clothing
- Wear compression socks/dressings to improve circulation to your legs
- Moisturize if your skin feels dry

REFERENCES

Contact us with any questions or concerns!
Battenkill Valley Health Center
Phone: (802) 375-6566
Website/Patient Portal
https://www.battenkillvalleyhealthcenter.org/
Address: 9 Church Street, Arlington, VT, 05250