

# Leg Ulcer Management

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# Definition of a Leg Ulcer

- A discontinuity of an epithelial surface.  
Harding Rians and Mann (1988)
- Tissue breakdown on the lower leg or foot due to any cause. Cullum (1994)
- A leg ulcer is a wound below the knee which takes more than 6 weeks to heal  
Dale (1995)



# Types of Leg Ulcer

- Venous disease (70%)
- Arterial disease
- Diabetes
- Rh. Arthritis
- Malignant disease
- Other causes



# Other causes of Leg Ulcers

- Vasculitic- Inflammatory causes
- Haematological ulcers-sickle cell disease, Polycythaemia, Thalassaemia
- Trauma
- Lymph oedema
- Pyoderma gangrenosum
- Infections- Leprosy, Syphilis, Tuberculosis
- Drug addiction



# Causes of venous dysfunction

- Reduced mobility, therefore reducing calf muscle pump action
- Damage to the valves- Varicose veins, DVT, Trauma injuries

The above result in venous congestion, venous hypertension and therefore fluid is forced into the interstitial space



# Characteristics of Venous disease

- Eczema- wet or dry
- Oedema- worse in the evening
- Pain- Dull, relief when leg is rested
- Ankle flair- distension of the small vessels in the ankle/foot
- Pulses- strong and palpable
- Site- Gaiter region
- Ulcer appearance shallow, flat exuding, develops slowly



# Wet weeping legs





# Multi breaks in the skin





# Gross oedema, weeping



# Infected leg ulcer

- Macerated
- Green brown tissue
- Malodour
- High exudates
- Pain +++
- Unhealthy tissue





# Trauma ulcer



# Mixed Aetiology Ulcers





# Arterial disease





# Acrocyanosis, feet cold and clammy, foot pulses normal



# Patient presents in surgery

- Probably have been self managing
- Need full assessment and Doppler test to assess the ABPI
- Aetiology of the ulcer
- Venous ulcer/compression
- Do not wait 6 weeks, early diagnosis



# Tissue Viability Chronic wound and leg ulcer clinic Clinics

- Choose and book appointments
- Aim for an appointment within 21 days
- Patients with non-healing ulcers
- Diagnostics for suspected intermittent claudication
- Annual doppler tests
- Made to measure compression hosiery



# Choose and book screen

## Search By:

Request Type: Appointment  
Priority: Routine

\* Enter one or more of the following fields. Entering information in more than one row may reduce the services returned.

**i** Clinical Term:  [Access Service Select](#)

Specialty: Dermatology Clinic Type: Leg Ulcer

**i** Named Clinician:

## Refine Your Search With:

Distances Within 30 Miles of Postcode S71 3EN

**i** Indicative Wait Time Less Than  Days

Organisation or Site Name:

Age and Gender Appropriate Services Only

## Additional Options:

Sort By: Distance  Content Sensitive

Referring Information:



With all of us in mind

# Skin Care

- The skin is the largest organ of the body
- Health of the skin is often taken for granted
- The skin changes with ageing, thinning and weakening
- Reduction in natural lubrication
- Reduction in bacterial defences





# Skin care

- Reduction in subcutaneous fat layer (so reduced protection and insulation)
- Therefore elderly skin is more likely to dry out and breakdown e.g. Skin tears, leg ulcers, pressure ulcers, eczema



# Skin tear



With all of us in mind

# Factors affecting the Skin

- Incontinence/moisture lesions
- Fungal infections
- Poor dietary intake/Dehydration
- Medication
- Allergies
- Personal hygiene
- Mental state





# Incontinence



# Management of Dry Skin

## Aims

1. To prevent further loss of water from the skin
2. To replace water and oils lost
3. Above requires complete emollient therapy i.e. combination of bath oil, soap substitute & emollient





# Products available - Variety

- Cleansers
- Emollients – Cream, ointment, lotions, bath additives
- Barriers
- Treatments



# Soap Substitutes

- Avoid soap, bubble bath, shower gels & replace with a soap substitute for anyone with dry skin. (if client understands and agrees)
- Can be used to the entire body including face or as a shaving cream
- Either prior to rinsing off with water or in the bath or shower
- Most pump dispenser emollients can be used as a soap substitute



# Use of emollients in dry skin conditions: Consensus statement. December 2012

- First line therapy for dry skin conditions
- Individual needs and preferences must be taken into account
- Aqueous Cream should not be use even as a soap substitute (evidence based)



# Complex emollients

- They are more expensive
- But, can be more cost effective for some elderly patients
- Added ingredients such as urea, glycerine to improve absorption, lauramacrogol to relieve itching or an antimicrobial to reduce infection



# How to apply emollients

- Clean hands
- Opt for pump dispensers, if tubs are prescribed, advise using a spoon or spatula
- A thin and even layer of product, gently smoothed so that the skin glistens
- Downwards in the direction of the hair growth to avoid blocking hair follicles





# Fire hazard!!!

## National patient safety Agency Warning

- Products containing a high % of paraffin in contact with bandages or clothing (eg 50/50 ointment, Epaderm) are easily ignited with a naked flame or cigarette.
- Does the patient smoke or have an open fire at home?
- Always consider safety!



# Skin care

- Patient choice & education to maximise the effect of skin care
- **THE BEST EMOLLIENT is the one the PATIENT WILL USE!!!!**



# HOWEVER!!

- Area prescribing committee have recommended the use of the ZERO range of emollients
- Zerocream - Zerobase - ZeroAQS (without SLS, sodium lauryl sulphate) Zeroguent
- Zeroguent
- Zerodouble Gel - Zeroderma
- Zeroneum/ Zerolatum bath additives



We've got your skin covered...

For more information please phone us on 01484 842217 or email zeroderma@thorntonross.com

"Complete emollient therapy (combinations of cream, ointment, bath oil and emollient soap substitute) will help provide maximal effect" PCDS and BAD 2009

**Creams**

EMOLLIENT GREASINESS



**Rich Cream**

EMOLLIENT GREASINESS



+ Soap Substitute

**Gel**

EMOLLIENT GREASINESS



+ Humectant

**Ointment**

EMOLLIENT GREASINESS



+ Soap Substitute  
+ Bath Additive

**Bath Additives**

EMOLLIENT GREASINESS



**Zerobase®**  
Emollient Cream

The same 21% w/w paraffins as Diprobase® cream but with slightly higher liquid paraffin content – to moisturise and protect red, inflamed dry skin conditions.

Size	PIP Code
30g sample	n/a
50g tube	356-4127
500g pump	305-4681



**Zerocream®**  
Emollient Cream

The same 27% w/w paraffins as E45® cream for moisturising dry skin conditions.

Size	PIP Code
30g sample	n/a
50g tube	346-3965
500g pump	339-7205



**ZeroAQS®**  
Emollient Cream

The same 21% liquid paraffins as Aqueous Cream but without SLS. This 2-in-1 cream can be conveniently used as a leave on emollient and soap substitute.

Size	PIP Code
50g sample	n/a
500g tub	362-6447



**Zeroguent®**  
Rich Emollient Cream

Similar ingredients to Unguentum M®, a rich cream to protect and hydrate dry scaly skin. Contains soya bean oil.

Size	PIP Code
100g tube	356-4119
500g tub	348-5000



**Zerodouble®**  
Emollient Gel

The same 30% emollients as Doublebase® gel plus 10% humectant for double moisturising action. Higher emolliency than a cream without the greasiness of an ointment.

Size	PIP Code
20g sample	n/a
100g tube	382-4612
475g bottle	382-4604



**Zeroderm®**  
Ointment

A rich 3-in-1 ointment with 70% paraffin content, like Epaderm® ointment. Can be used as a moisturiser, bath additive and soap substitute.

Size	PIP Code
50g sample	n/a
125g tub	370-3105
500g tub	370-3113



**Zerolatum®**  
Emollient Bath Additive

The same 60% w/w liquid paraffin base as Oilatum Junior® providing a soothing bath treatment for eczema and other dry skin conditions.

This fragrance-free oil disperses easily in water.

Size	PIP Code
20ml sample	n/a
500ml bottle	339-7213



**Zeroneum®**  
Emollient Bath Additive

The same 80%+ w/w soya bean oil base as Baileum®, providing a soothing bath treatment for eczema and other dry skin conditions.

With a gentle fragrance, it disperses easily in water.

Size	PIP Code
20ml sample	n/a
500ml bottle	355-8032

Cardboard packaging,

# Any Questions?



With all of us in mind