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Venous Stasis Ulcer

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

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- I. The client/caregiver can define venous stasis ulcer.**
 - A. It is the breakdown of the skin caused by incompetent valves in the veins.
 - B. Incompetent valves cause excessive venous pressure that cause small skin veins and venules to rupture.
 - C. Venous ulcers frequently occur on front of lower legs or around the ankle.
 - D. They are slow to heal, prone to trauma, and may lead to secondary infections.

- II. The client/caregiver can list factors that increase risk of venous stasis ulcers.**
 - A. Thrombophlebitis
 - B. Varicose veins
 - C. Poor hygiene
 - D. Poor nutritional status
 - E. General debilitation

- III. The client/caregiver can recognize signs and symptoms of venous insufficiency.**
 - A. Thickened leathery skin
 - B. Reddish brown skin discoloration
 - C. Swelling of extremity
 - D. Pain (relieved with elevation of foot)

- IV. The client/caregiver can list measures to prevent or treat venous stasis ulcers.**
 - A. Use elastic compression stockings. Have more than one pair of stockings so that one pair can be worn while the other pair is laundered.
 - B. Apply stockings each morning before legs are lowered to floor.
 - C. Promote weight loss if necessary.
 - D. Eat a well-balanced diet high in protein, vitamin C, zinc, and iron.
 - E. Avoid heating pads, hot water bottles, and so forth.

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- F. Elevate legs at regular periods for 15 to 20 minutes.
- G. Walk or do isometric calf muscle pumps frequently.
- H. Raise the foot of the bed to promote venous drainage during sleep.
- I. Wear shoes with laces to reduce pooling of blood in the feet.
- J. Avoid poorly fitting shoes and sandals to avoid injury.
- K. Avoid morning showers or sitting in front of a fire because the heat dilates the blood vessels and may add to congestion and swelling.
- L. Avoid extreme temperatures.
- M. Avoid nicotine and caffeine.

- V. The client/caregiver can provide treatment as ordered by physician.**
 - A. Provide dressing changes of wound as ordered by physician using aseptic technique. Avoid tape directly on skin.
 - B. Application of Unna boots.
 - C. Chronic nonhealing ulcers may be treated with topical hyperbaric oxygen therapy.
 - D. Vascular surgery for repair or debridement of wound.
 - E. Pain medication as directed.

- VI. The client/caregiver is aware of possible complications.**
 - A. Infection
 - B. Reoccurrence of venous stasis ulcer
 - C. Amputation of extremity
 - D. Cellulitis

RESOURCES

- Registered dietician
- Certified nurse wound specialist
- Podiatrist

(Continued)

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