Stasis Dermatitis

Stasis dermatitis occurs when veins lose the ability to pump blood back to the heart (*poor venous circulation*). Dry skin is commonly accompanies poor venous circulation. Stasis dermatitis appears as red, scaly, itchy patches on the legs. A yellowish or light-brown discoloration is also present. Due to scratching or other trauma, these patches can become an ulcer and this ulcer may remain for long periods of time. The ulcer can also become infected. Swelling of the legs is often present with stasis dermatitis. If the leg is swollen, this increases the risk of infection and further damage to the skin. Sometimes intense itching occurs before signs of stasis dermatitis along with tingling and burning. You may find yourself scratching the insides of your ankles or rubbing your ankles together before the rash appears After healing, there are often brown spots on the affected skin.

Treatment includes resting and elevating the affected leg above the level of the chest (heart) if possible. Topical cortisone creams and ointments may be needed, as well as medicine to reduce swelling in the legs (*diuretics*). Support hose or an elastic wrap may also be needed to reduce swelling. If there is an infection, antibiotics may also be used. Your skin may react to topical medicine (*sensitization*). Your skin may react to ingredients in wool wax alcohols, fragrances and even topical corticosteroids.

Burrow's solution wet packs applied for 30 minutes three times daily will help the weepy rash, but stop before your skin dries excessively. Instead of Burrow's solution, a less costly alternative is 3 parts of white vinegar to 1 quart of water. Grease your legs daily with ointments such as petroleum jelly to fight dryness. Avoid scratching or injuring the affected area. Call your doctor right away if your rash worsens, if an ulcer forms, or if you have a fever or other severe symptoms.

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