

CADTH Reference List

Compression Garments for People With Venous Leg Ulcers

December 2021

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Cite As: *Compression Garments for People With Venous Leg Ulcers*. (CADTH reference list). Ottawa: CADTH; 2021 Dec.

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Funding: CADTH receives funding from Canada's federal, provincial, and territorial governments, with the exception of Quebec.

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Key Messages

- Two primary qualitative studies explored the perspectives and experiences of people engaged with compression garments as part of their maintenance therapy to prevent venous leg ulcer recurrence.
- Three primary qualitative studies explored the perspectives and experiences of people engaged with compression garments as part of the processes of treating venous leg ulcers.
- No mixed-methods studies exploring the use of compression garments as either part of maintenance therapy to prevent venous leg ulcer recurrence or as part of the process of treating venous leg ulcers were reviewed.

Research Questions

1. What literature is available that explores how people — or their formal and informal caregivers — engage with and experience the use of compression garments as part of their maintenance therapy to prevent wound recurrence?
2. What literature is available that explores how people with a venous leg ulcer, or their formal and informal caregivers, engage with and experience the process of treating venous leg ulcers with compression garments (as a non-surgical intervention)?

Methods

Literature Search Methods

A limited literature search was conducted by an information specialist on key resources including MEDLINE via OVID, the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) via EBSCOhost, and Scopus. The search strategy comprised both controlled vocabulary, such as the National Library of Medicine's MeSH (Medical Subject Headings), and keywords. The main search concepts were compression garments and venous leg ulcers. CADTH-developed search filters were applied to limit retrieval to qualitative studies. The search was limited to English-language documents published between January 1, 2011 and November 29, 2021. Internet links were provided, where available.

Selection Criteria

One reviewer screened literature search results (titles and abstracts) and selected publications according to the inclusion criteria presented in Table 1. Full texts of study publications were not reviewed.

Table 1: Selection Criteria

Criteria	Description
Sample	<p>Question 1: People 18 years or older living with a venous leg ulcer that has been closed through treatment; people involved in caring for those living with venous leg ulcers (e.g., health care providers, family, friends)</p> <p>Question 2: People aged 18 years or older living with a venous leg ulcer; people involved in caring for those with venous leg ulcers (e.g., health care providers, family, friends)</p>
Phenomena of interest	<p>Question 1: Use of compression garments (i.e., compression stockings, compression tubing, or loop/fastener compression systems) for the prevention of recurrent venous leg ulcers</p> <p>Process of applying compression garments and associated challenges</p> <p>Question 2: Process of identifying and seeking treatment for venous leg ulcers</p> <p>Process of undergoing non-surgical treatment for venous leg ulcers</p>
Design	Any qualitative design
Evaluation	Experiences, perspectives, or understandings of any of the processes listed under the “phenomena of interest” for either question
Research type	Primary qualitative studies, qualitative components of primary mixed-methods studies (excluding surveys)

Results

Qualitative Rapid Response reports are organized by types of study designs – primary qualitative studies and primary mixed-methods studies.

Two primary qualitative studies^{1,2} explored the perspectives and experiences of people engaged with compression garments as part of their maintenance therapy to prevent venous leg ulcer recurrence. While neither of these studies take experiences with compression garments as the aim of their inquiry, the description of findings noted in both abstracts indicate that experiences with compression garments are a primary component of the study. For this reason, we have included both, as they seem likely to speak to research question 1. Three primary qualitative studies³⁻⁵ explored the perspectives and experiences of people engaged with compression garments as part of the processes of treating venous leg ulcers. No mixed-methods studies were found exploring the use of compression garments as either part of maintenance therapy to prevent venous leg ulcer recurrence or as part of the process of treating venous leg ulcers.

Additional references of potential interest that did not meet the inclusion criteria are provided in Appendix 1.

References

Primary Qualitative Studies – Question 1

1. Probst S, Sechaud L, Bobbink P, Skinner MB, Weller CD. The lived experience of recurrence prevention in patients with venous leg ulcers: An interpretative phenomenological study. *J Tissue Viability*. 2020 Aug;29(3):176-179. [PubMed](#)
2. Stewart A, Edwards H, Finlayson K. Reflection on the cause and avoidance of recurrent venous leg ulcers: An interpretive descriptive approach. *J Clin Nurs*. 2018 Mar;27(5-6):e931-e939. [PubMed](#)

Primary Qualitative Studies – Question 2

3. Weller CD, Richards C, Turnour L, Team V. Patient explanation of adherence and non-adherence to venous leg ulcer treatment: a qualitative study. *Front Pharmacol*. 2021;12:663570. [PubMed](#)
4. Weller CD, Richards C, Turnour L, Team V. Venous leg ulcer management in Australian primary care: Patient and clinician perspectives. *Int J Nurs Stud*. 2021 Jan;113:103774. [PubMed](#)
5. da Silva MH, Pinto de Jesus MC, Moura de Oliveira D, Barbosa Merighi MA. Unna's boot: experience of care of people with venous ulcers. *Rev Bras Enferm*. 2017;70(2):349-356. [PubMed](#)

Primary Mixed-Methods Studies – Question 1

No references identified

Primary Mixed-Methods Studies – Question 2

No references identified

Appendix 1: References of Potential Interest

6. Weller CD, Team V, Probst S, et al. Health literacy in people with venous leg ulcers: a protocol for scoping review. *BMJ Open*. 2021 05 11;11(5):e044604. [PubMed](#)
7. Chitambira F. Patient perspectives: explaining low rates of compliance to compression therapy. *Wound Practice & Research*. 2019;27(4):168-174.
8. Madden M. The ghost of Nora Batty: A qualitative exploration of the impact of footwear, bandaging and hosiery interventions in chronic wound care. *Chronic Illn*. 2015 Sep;11(3):218-229. [PubMed](#)
9. Kapp S, Miller C. The experience of self-management following venous leg ulcer healing. *J Clin Nurs*. 2015 May;24(9-10):1300-1309. [PubMed](#)