

Check with your doctor to see if you are healthy enough to do this kind of activity. Use a cane or a walker if you have trouble with your balance. Join a local group that walks regularly at a pace that is comfortable for you.

## EXERCISES COMBINED WITH COMPRESSION

Compression bandages and stockings are often prescribed to help keep the swelling from building up around the ankles. These can also limit the ability of the calf muscles to move the ankle. It is important to do these exercises while wearing your compression. In fact, blood flow back to the heart is better when calf muscle pumping exercises are done with compression bandages or stockings.

Please consider seeing a physiotherapist for further ways to improve your swelling in your legs. For further information contact [cptwcc@gmail.com](mailto:cptwcc@gmail.com) with any questions.



## SOURCES

Best Practices for the management of Lymphedema: Compression Therapy: A position document on compression bandaging. International Lymphedema Framework, 2012. Available at: <http://www.lympho.org/resources.php>. Accessed Nov. 24, 2014.

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## DISCLAIMER

This brochure is provided as general information for the health care professional and patient regarding venous leg ulcer exercises. The materials contain guidance, which are based on current literature and clinical information at the time the material was produced, and which we believe was reliable when the material was created. However, assessment and treatment practices continually change, such that the completeness or accuracy of its content cannot be guaranteed over time. 3M Canada recommends that the information contained in this material be used as a guide only. In all cases, professional clinical judgment must be used for assessment, intervention, and evaluation in each clinical situation. 3M Canada shall not be liable or responsible for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the guidelines contained in, or errors or omissions from this material. This information is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnostics or treatment. Always seek the advice of a doctor with any questions regarding a medical condition. Do not disregard professional advice or delay in seeking it because of something you read here. In this brochure, material from different sources and industry experts were used.



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# Chronic Leg Edema Exercises

Chronic leg edema also called lymphedema occurs when fluid builds up in the tissues under the skin. There are many causes of leg swelling and if left untreated can cause changes in the skin, pain and inflammation.

For more information about lymphedema contact: [www.lymphedema.org](http://www.lymphedema.org).

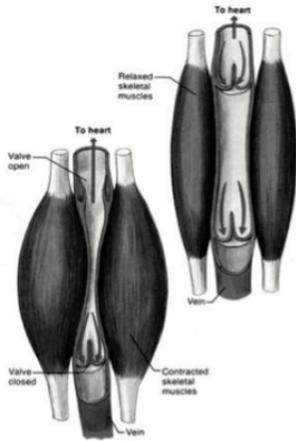
Compression is the cornerstone of treatment and is best used with venous leg ulcer exercises. This brochure is intended to provide examples of different exercises that people with venous leg ulcers can use. Refer to disclaimer for more information.

Minor bumps or scratches can cause the skin to breakdown.

## CALF MUSCLE PUMP

The heart is well known to pump blood through the blood vessels (called arteries) out to parts of your body.

This circulation brings oxygen to tissues located throughout the body including those in the legs and feet. The calf muscles located between your knee and ankle contract and relax and help to pump the blood in the veins back up to the heart. In this way the calf muscles have been termed “a second heart”. This second heart must be working properly to control swelling.



## EXERCISES

In order for the calf muscle pump to work properly you need to have enough movement in your ankles, and strong muscles that can easily move your foot up and down. Certain exercises can help improve this and reduce swelling and pain.

### Ankle Pumps:

Repeat 30 times every 1-2 hours when awake. Make sure you move your ankle through the full range of movement.



### Calf Stretches:

Gently pull on the towel until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf. Hold 60 seconds. When you no longer feel the stretch pull harder on the towel. Repeat 3-5 times every day. Repeat with knee bent.



### Calf

#### Strengthening:

With your leg straight, press into the Thera-Band® as far as you are able. Hold 3 seconds. Release to start counting 1, 2, 3, 4. Repeat 20 times and rest. Repeat 3 times.

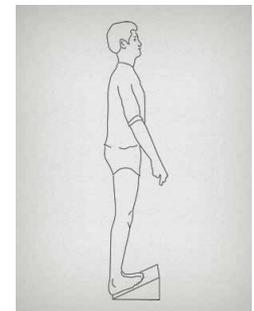


### Using a chair for support

Push up onto your toes lifting your heel off the ground. Repeat 10 times or until you can no longer raise your heel off the floor.



Stand on a gradual wedge shaped block. Move your foot onto the board until you feel a stretch of the muscle on the back of your knee. Hold that position as long as possible.



A persistent pain in the calf muscle that is tender to touch should be brought to the attention of your health care provider.

### Walking

Walking short distances can also help improve blood circulation to your legs and feet. It is important to walk as briskly as possible with your feet pointing forward so that the calf muscle is pumping with each step. Thirty minutes of walking at least 3 times a week has been shown to improve the pumping action of the calf muscle and increase the ability of your leg muscles to return blood back to the heart.

