



Call your health care provider if you have any of the following:

- new sores or red spots on your feet or legs that do not go away
- sudden darkening of the foot or toes
- skin around the ulcer is red or swollen the ulcer has a foul smell or is draining pus
- increased pain in your legs and feet.

For more information on Arterial Ulcers:

Wounds Canada: DIY Series

- [Wound Prevention and Treatment: Do it Yourself \(DIY\) or Call in a Pro? Arterial Foot and Leg Ulcers](#)



An ulcer is a sore, wound, or injury to the skin and tissues which can vary from a reddened area to a deep open sore. Arterial leg and foot ulcers can be hard to heal because the blood supply to the legs and feet is poor. Preventing injury to the legs and feet is very important.

Improving Blood Flow to Your Legs

- Change your position often.
- Exercise your legs by flexing and pointing your toes and moving your ankles around in circles.
- Walk 3 or more days a week for 30 to 45 minutes taking rest periods as needed.
- Allow for frequent rest periods between activities.
- Do not wear support stockings or compression bandages **unless your health care provider has ordered it.**
- Do not Smoke. Available resources to [quit smoking](#).
- Avoid crossing your legs when you are sitting.
- Avoid standing or sitting for a long period of time.
- Do not raise your legs above your heart level when you have your feet up.
- Do not use cold packs, hot water bottles, or heating pads on your legs and feet.
- Avoid wearing tight shoes, socks, or clothing as they may cut off the blood flow to legs and feet.

Preventing Injury to Your Legs and Feet

- Use non-perfumed moisturizer on dry skin twice a day.
- Cut toenails straight across.
- Check feet and legs twice a day for any signs of injury. Look for red spots that do not go away. Use a mirror to check hard to see areas.
- Do not apply moisturizer between your toes.
- Do not go barefoot; indoors or outdoors. Always wear shoes.
- Do not treat a [callous or corn](#) on your own. See your [podiatrist](#) or health care provider for advice.

