



What is chronic venous insufficiency?

Chronic venous insufficiency (CVI) happens when the veins in the legs can't push blood back up to the heart like they should, which makes blood collect in the legs instead of moving through the body.

Symptoms

You may have CVI, if:

-  Legs or ankles are puffy, swollen, itchy or in pain
-  Calves feel tight or heavy
-  Pain when walking that goes away when you rest
-  Skin around your ankles turns brown
-  Bumpy, twisted veins under your skin
-  Sores on your legs that won't heal
-  Restless legs
-  Cramps in leg muscles

Causes and Risks

The following can cause CVI or make it more likely to happen:

- Extra body weight
- Pregnancy
- Family history of vein problems
- Standing or sitting for a long time without movement
- Blood clots in your legs
- Smoking

Talk to a Doctor

These symptoms can be mild or serious. If you have any of these symptoms or notice other changes in your legs, you should see a doctor.



Recognizing Chronic Venous Insufficiency

A vascular surgeon will ask you questions about your health and check your legs. You might also need a test called a duplex ultrasound. This test shows how blood moves through your veins and checks if your veins are healthy. Sometimes they may use other tests like a venogram (X-ray with dye to see veins) to get a better look at your veins.

Role of a Vascular Surgeon



To find out if you have CVI, your doctor might send you to a vascular surgeon. Vascular surgeons are the only specialists trained to diagnose and treat the full spectrum of vascular diseases. They can determine if you have CVI, what treatment option is best for you and how you can keep your blood vessels healthy.

Treatment

Treatment options include:

- ✓ Lifestyle changes, like putting your legs up, exercising, and wearing compression socks that help blood flow better
- ✓ Medicine to reduce swelling and help you feel better
- ✓ Small procedures where doctors close damaged veins using heat or injections
- ✓ Surgery to tie off or remove veins if it is a serious case