

VENOUS INSUFFICIENCY SYMPTOMS

Venous insufficiency simply refers to the backward flow of blood in the superficial or deep system of veins (reference “*vein anatomy and physiology*” section) caused by faulty or refluxing one-way check valves (reference “*vein anatomy and physiology*” section) causing blood to flow the wrong way and pool in the lower legs and extremities. This creates high pressure in the venous system and this high pressure increases and becomes maximal around the feet and ankle area. The result is dilation or stretching of the veins, which causes pain, achiness and discomfort. The pooling or stagnation of venous blood, which contains metabolic byproducts of cellular metabolism in the muscles of the lower legs, also leads to pain, discomfort and restlessness. Venous insufficiency symptoms are usually lessened when one raises their legs higher than their heart or engages in walking activities.

Signs or the result of venous insufficiency are bulging, varicose or reticular spider veins, leg swelling and edema, development of thickened skin (especially in the inner aspect of the lower leg), and coloration changes with a reddish blue tint to the skin also frequently in the lower inner aspect of the leg and around the ankle. The worse sign that we see with venous insufficiency is the development of an open, non-healing ulceration or “sore” quite typically near the inside of the ankle in the lower leg. Another sign of venous insufficiency is a formation of blood clots, either in the superficial veins (superficial venous thrombosis) or in the deep veins, which are not visible to the naked eye (deep vein thrombosis-DVT). (reference “*blood clots*” section)

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