



Skin changes: what are they and what causes them?

People with disorders of the venous and/or lymphatic systems will see a number of gradual changes occur to their skin with time. If these changes are noticed, steps can be taken to stop them becoming more severe. Here, we provide a visual guide to some of the most common.

Aching, tired legs

If your legs tire, ache and/or feel heavy after a period of standing this can be an early warning sign of venous and/or lymphatic disorder.



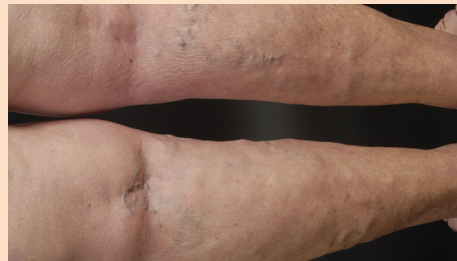
Spider veins

Spider veins are capillaries in the skin that are widened, giving them the appearance of spider legs. They could be an early sign of venous disorder, but also occur as part of normal aging.



Varicose veins

These are caused by weak or damaged valves in the veins of the leg that allow the backflow of blood. This causes the vein to stretch and enlarge so that it bulges and becomes visible.





Haemosiderin staining

Is seen as a purple or rust-coloured discolouration of the skin that, over time, may blacken. It is a sign that blood is pooling in the veins as a result of weak or damaged valves.



Swelling

Mild swelling can occur following standing or sitting for a while. It is caused by fluid (lymph) collecting in the tissues of the affected leg. In the early stages, the swelling will be soft when touched.



Venous leg ulcer

Venous leg ulcers occur when chronic pooling of the blood in the lower limb results in several changes that make the skin fragile and vulnerable to damage.



Venous eczema

This is also known as venous dermatitis or venous stasis dermatitis and is also caused by the pooling of blood in the leg veins. It can occur on one or both legs.



To find out more about skin changes and how to manage them, visit:

www.daylong.co.uk

