










Lower Leg Wound Guidance



To establish the potential wound type for wounds below the knee to the malleolus (ankle).

Red Legs	Chronic Oedema (Lymphoedema)	Wet legs / Lymphorrhoea	Cellulitis	Haematoma	Skin Tear	Leg Ulcer Venous	Leg Ulcer Mixed	Leg Ulcer Arterial
Definitions								
								
<p>Presents as redness, warmth and tenderness of the lower limbs, without signs of infection, in patients with a history of venous disease, chronic oedema and dermatological conditions. (Salmon 2016; Wounds UK 2019).</p> <p>Refer to the Guidance for identifying Cellulitis or Red Legs if required.</p>	<p>Includes all forms of swelling, including lymphoedema, that has been present for longer than three months. (Best practice in the community Chronic oedema 2019).</p>	<p>Discharge of lymph fluid through the skin, caused by untreated oedema. It appears as beads of fluid. (Best practice in the community Chronic oedema 2019).</p>	<p>An inflammatory skin condition caused by acute infection of the skin, characterised by a superficial, diffuse, spreading skin infection without underlying collection of pus. Bilateral leg cellulitis is very rare. (Atkins 2016) (NICE 2015).</p>	<p>A bruise or collection of blood in the tissues. They appear as a dark red/black collection of blood standing proud of the skin. (Beldon 2011). (Collins et al, 2002).</p>	<p>A skin tear is a traumatic wound caused by mechanical forces, including the removal of adhesives. Severity may vary by depth (not extending through the subcutaneous layer). (Le Blanc K et al 2018). Refer to the Guidance for identifying Cellulitis or Red Legs if required.</p>	<p>A break in the skin that has been present for more than 14 days, in the presence of Venous Disease. (NICE 2020).</p>	<p>A break in the skin that has been present for more than 14 days, in the presence of Venous Disease and Peripheral Arterial Disease. (Harding 2015).</p>	<p>A break in the skin that has been present for more than 14 days, as a result of reduced arterial blood flow, in the presence of Peripheral Arterial Disease. (Moffatt 2001).</p>
						<p>If there is a break in the skin that has been present for more than 14 days, with no diagnosis of Venous Disease or Peripheral Arterial Disease is defined as a Leg Ulcer – Unknown Aetiology</p>		

If the named product on this pathway is not available a temporary second line product is available to use. This can be found within the main text of the Doncaster Wide Wound Care Formulary Document.