

# No harm in asking

The essential questions to ask  
your GP or other healthcare  
professional

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Knowing what questions to ask your GP or other healthcare professional can help you make sure that you, or someone you care for, gets the right treatment for a leg or foot condition.

Here are the nine questions that everyone who has a leg or foot condition should ask their GP or healthcare professional.

## "What are my treatment options?"

Talking to your clinician about your treatment options and choices can feel empowering as you work in partnership to decide on the best course of treatment tailored to your individual needs.



**"Do I need to be referred to a specialist to get a diagnosis in order to access the right treatment(s)?"**

Getting a diagnosis can be the first step in finding the right course of treatment. To get a diagnosis, you may need to be referred to a different specialist.



**"Are there any lifestyle changes that you feel I should make to better manage my condition(s)?"**

Taking ownership of your own health when this is possible can make all the difference. This could be changes in diet, increasing movement or even finding ways to manage health anxiety.



## "What are the risks associated with my condition(s)?"

It's really important to understand the risks that your health condition(s) present so that you are empowered with the right knowledge and understand why particular treatments, such as compression stockings, are so important.

If you have a better understanding of what could happen in the longer term this may help to motivate you in sticking to a treatment plan or making certain lifestyle changes that can improve your overall health outcomes.



## "Are there any resources or organisations that you'd recommend?"

Your clinician may be able to signpost you to relevant charities or professional organisations where you can find out more information and the latest treatments or clinical guidance available.

They may also be able to put you in touch with a local community group so that you can connect with other patients and share self-management tips. Information is power!



## **"What types of compression would work best for me and are there options to consider?"**

There are many different types of compression available and suppliers work to advance the technology and materials used and so treatment options are constantly evolving.

If you're prescribed compression hosiery, your clinician may recommend a certain type of material, such as a flat knit rather than circular knit, but it's important that you understand the differences. You may find that a different type of compression like a wrap or layered bandaging is advised instead.

Treatment options should always be decided in partnership with you and your clinician – you know your body and symptoms best.

## **"How can I best manage my pain and how can I escalate treatment if my pain increases?"**

Many patients experience pain as a result of their condition(s) and need ongoing support in managing this.

What may work for a time may stop working, or your condition may change and so it's important to talk through the options available to you. It's reassuring to know that you can talk to someone if your pain does increase.



**"How often can I expect appointments/regular check-ups?  
Is there any flexibility in frequency and location?"**

It's good to know how often you can expect an appointment and when to call up to book in as many clinics have a waiting list.

For some conditions, such as a leg wound, frequent appointments to change dressings may be required and flexibility in the time or location of appointments can make all the difference, particularly for those with caring, work or other commitments.



**"Concerned about the care that you are receiving or worried that you or someone you care for might be at risk of harm?"**

Get in touch with The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) or The Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS) in Scotland.

Both PALS and PASS offer confidential advice and support and information on health-related matters. You can find PALS or PASS officers in your local hospital.



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