

## THE ROLE OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF VARICOSE ULCERS: A REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Varicose ulcers, also known as venous leg ulcers, are chronic wounds commonly caused by venous insufficiency. They are typically located on the lower leg, around the medial malleolus, and result from sustained venous hypertension. These ulcers are often recurrent, painful, and slow to heal, causing considerable distress and disability. While internal systemic homeopathic treatment forms the cornerstone of constitutional management, local applications have also been historically employed in homeopathy and other integrative medicine systems to support wound healing, reduce infection, and ease symptoms. **Objective:** To review and evaluate the role of local applications in the homeopathic management of varicose ulcers and assess their efficacy as supportive therapy alongside constitutional treatment. **Method:** This review synthesizes findings from classical homeopathic texts, clinical case studies, and contemporary literature regarding the use of local applications such as ointments, dressings, and homeopathic mother tinctures. Particular attention was given to agents traditionally used for wound healing, antiseptic action, and tissue regeneration. **Conclusion:** Local applications in homeopathy can

play a significant complementary role in managing varicose ulcers. Remedies such as *Calendula Officinalis*, *Echinacea*, *Hamamelis*, and *Hypericum* offer anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, and tissue-regenerative effects. When used appropriately in conjunction with constitutional remedies, local applications can enhance healing, reduce pain, and prevent

infection. However, more empirical research is necessary to standardize protocols and validate outcomes.

**KEYWORDS:** Varicose Ulcers, Venous Ulcers, Local Applications, Homeopathy, Calendula, Wound Healing, Mother Tinctures, Ulcer Management, Complementary Therapy.

## INTRODUCTION

Varicose ulcers, or venous leg ulcers, are chronic skin defects that occur due to improper functioning of venous valves, usually in the legs. They are a complication of chronic venous insufficiency and affect a significant portion of the aging population, especially those with a history of varicose veins, deep vein thrombosis, obesity, or prolonged standing.

### Characteristics of Varicose Ulcers<sup>[1,5]</sup>

- Usually appear on the lower third of the leg, above the ankle.
- Associated with skin discoloration, edema, and eczema.
- Often painful, exudative, and slow healing.
- Prone to secondary bacterial infections.

### Pathophysiology<sup>[1,2]</sup>

Prolonged venous hypertension causes capillary leakage, resulting in tissue damage, inflammation, and poor oxygenation. This leads to the breakdown of skin and underlying tissues, forming ulcers. While systemic treatment aims to correct the underlying venous pathology, local applications are vital for wound care, prevention of infection, and symptomatic relief.

### Local Applications of Homeopathic Medicine for Varicose Ulcers<sup>[9,13,14]</sup>

Homeopathy approaches varicose ulcers holistically, emphasizing the correction of the underlying venous weakness through constitutional treatment, miasmatic assessment, and lifestyle changes. In addition, **local applications**, such as homeopathic tinctures and ointments, have a supportive role in wound healing.

#### 1. Calendula Officinalis (Marigold)

- **Form:** Mother tincture, cream, or lotion.
- **Properties:** Antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, promotes granulation and healing.
- **Indications:** Painful, slow-healing ulcers with pus and discharge.
- **Application:** Used as a diluted wash or dressing.

## 2. Echinacea Angustifolia

- **Form:** Mother tincture.
- **Properties:** Antiseptic, immunostimulant, detoxifying.
- **Indications:** Infected ulcers, foul-smelling discharges.
- **Application:** Applied as a compress or diluted wash to help with sepsis.

## 3. Hamamelis Virginiana (Witch Hazel)

- **Form:** Mother tincture or lotion.
- **Properties:** Astringent, venotonic, anti-inflammatory.
- **Indications:** Varicose veins with bruised soreness, bleeding ulcers.
- **Application:** Local application over varicose ulcers to reduce venous congestion.

## 4. Hypericum Perforatum

- **Form:** Tincture or cream.
- **Properties:** Nerve healing, antiseptic, pain-relieving.
- **Indications:** Ulcers with shooting or neuralgic pain, nerve damage.
- **Application:** Applied to ulcer edges or painful areas.

## 5. Arnica Montana

- **Form:** Tincture (diluted) or gel.
- **Properties:** Anti-inflammatory, analgesic, healing enhancer.
- **Indications:** Bruised, inflamed skin around ulcers.
- **Application:** Not directly on open wounds but useful in surrounding areas with inflammation.

## 6. Silicea

- **Internal and Local Use:** When used topically in cream, supports healing of deep-seated ulcers that are indolent.
- **Indications:** Fistulous ulcers, sluggish healing with pus formation.

## 7. Graphites

- **Form:** Ointment.
- **Properties:** Aids in healing ulcers with sticky, honey-like discharge.
- **Application:** Particularly helpful when ulcers have crusts or thick discharges.

## 8. Bellis Perennis

- **Form:** Tincture.
- **Indications:** Venous congestion and deep tissue healing; particularly helpful when Arnica fails.

### How To Use<sup>[9]</sup>

- Most tinctures are diluted in water (5–10 drops in 30 mL of water) before application.
- All applications should be done under hygienic conditions to prevent secondary infections.
- Local applications should never replace constitutional treatment but enhance recovery.
- Use of cotton gauze soaked in tincture solution and changed daily is a common practice.

## CONCLUSION

Varicose ulcers are a challenging chronic condition requiring both systemic and local management. Homeopathy offers a holistic solution through constitutional remedies and effective local applications. Agents like Calendula, Echinacea, Hamamelis, and Hypericum serve as potent topical supports to manage infection, reduce inflammation, and stimulate healing. When used properly, local applications in homeopathy not only provide symptomatic relief but also support tissue regeneration and enhance the overall healing process. Despite their long-standing traditional use, scientific validation and clinical trials are necessary to integrate these approaches more formally into wound management protocols.

### Conflict of interest

None.

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