CASE 29-1

A 70-year-old man has a 5-month history of an ulcer on his right lower leg. He has a 3-year history of leg edema, and 1 year ago he developed an erythematous scaly plaque within the area of the edema.

What is the one most likely diagnosis?

(A) Arterial ulcer

(B) Venous ulcer

(C) Ulcer due to chronic infection in the plaque

(D) Pyoderma gangrenosum

(E) Neuropathic ulcer
The correct answer is (B), venous ulcer.

Venous ulcers typically occur in patients with a history of long-standing edema and stasis dermatitis. Arterial ulcers usually are not associated with a pre-existing rash. Chronic bacterial infections rarely cause leg ulcers. The ulcers associated with pyoderma gangrenosum have undermined and frequently violaceous borders. Neuropathic ulcers are typically on the foot.