

Leg Vein Information & Treatment

Spider veins are formed by the dilation of a small group of blood vessels located close to the surface of the skin. Although they can appear anywhere on the body, spider veins are most commonly found on the face and legs. They usually pose no health hazard, but may produce a dull aching in the legs after prolonged standing and indicate more severe venous disease. Varicose veins are abnormally swollen or enlarged blood vessels caused by a weakening in the vein's wall.

Leg veins are usually treated with either sclerotherapy (injections) or laser (Nd:YAG). The decision to use one or another modality is decided upon by the size of the veins, failure of prior treatments, or the decision of the patient.

Sclerotherapy is an effective modality to address small veins. A concentrated saline or specially developed chemical solution is injected with a very small needle into the spider or varicose vein. The solution causes the vein to close up or collapse and become scar tissue that is eventually absorbed by the body. The work of carrying the blood is shifted to other healthy blood vessels nearby.

Laser therapy may be effective for certain leg veins and facial blood vessels. The heat from the high-intensity laser selectively destroys the abnormal veins. This modality is more uncomfortable than sclerotherapy, but for certain veins, it is more effective.

We may utilize a combination of techniques and technologies to provide an optimal treatment program for your individual condition and lifestyle.

Leg vein therapy generally requires multiple treatment sessions. One to three sessions are usually required to effectively treat any vein. The same area should not be retreated for four to six weeks to allow for complete healing, although other areas may undergo treatment during this time.

Post-treatment therapy includes wearing bandages and support hose for one week following treatment. Walking also helps speed recovery, however, more intense exercise is not allowed for 1 week. Although these treatments work for existing spider and varicose veins, they do not prevent new ones from developing.

Most patients report few, if any minor side effects, which usually disappear in time. Temporary reactions can include a slight swelling of the leg or foot, minor bruising, pigmentation, the temporary appearance of new blood vessels, redness and mild soreness. If brown pigmentation develops, it may last up to 1 year.

Preoperative Information

- You will be given a prescription for compression stockings. Bring them with you to your treatments. You will wear them for 1 week, except to sleep or shower. No exercise for 1 week.
- Find the nearest place to you to fill your prescription
- Come with clean, shaven skin. No lotions or sunscreen
- You may bring shorts to wear during the treatment
- Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Aleve, Naprosyn) for 2 weeks prior to therapy and 1 week after therapy
- Avoid all Herbal Supplements, Fish Oils, and Vitamin E for 1 month prior to treatment.
- Alert us if you are on blood thinners such as Plavix, Heparin, or Coumadin as they may interfere with the treatment results.