

FAQ - Spider Veins/ Injection Sclerotherapy:

Q: What are spider veins?

A: Spider Veins are bundles of small red or blue veins near the surface of the skin found in millions of adult women. Spider Veins often do not cause symptoms, but in many cases can be quite uncomfortable.

Q: What causes spider veins?

A: No one knows the exact cause of spider veins, but there are several factors that cause a person to be more likely to develop them. Heredity, or being born with weak vein valves, is the greatest factor. Hormones play a role. The hormonal changes that occur during puberty, pregnancy, and menopause as well as taking estrogen progesterone and birth control pills can cause a woman to develop varicose and spider veins. During pregnancy, besides the increase of hormone level, there also is a great increase in the volume of blood in the body that can cause veins to enlarge. The enlarged uterus also puts more pressure on the veins. (Within three months after delivery varicose veins usually improve. However, more abnormal veins are likely to develop and remain after additional pregnancies.) Other factors that weaken vein valves and that may cause varicose or spider veins include aging, obesity, leg injury, and prolonged standing, such as long hours on the job.

Q: My legs hurt all the time, but I just have spider veins. Is this normal?

A: Spider veins can often produce symptoms.

Q: My friends say that these veins will just come back, so what's the use of having them treated?

A: When treated properly by an experienced professional, your treated veins will not come back however; you may over time develop new veins.

Q: I am on a diet, should I wait until I reach my goal weight to begin my treatment?

A: Weight has nothing to do with the success of vein disease treatments.

Q: How are spider veins treated?

A: We treat spider veins with a procedure called injection sclerotherapy.

Q: What do you use to inject into the vein?

A: There are a number of sclerosing agents. Factors such as the size, color, pattern, and our experience, will dictate which solution works best.

Q: How does Sclerotherapy treatment for spider veins work?

A: Sclerotherapy involves placing a tiny needle with a mild soap solution into the affected spider veins. The spider veins then gradually absorb and disappear.

Q: Is Sclerotherapy painful?

A: Generally patients report little to no pain. There may be a slight warming or stinging sensation, which quickly dissipates. For this reason, anesthesia is rarely required.

Q: Will I have to wear support hose?

A: When undergoing treatment of certain types of veins, compression of these veins is part of the treatment. To ensure you have the very best results, we require that you wear them for a specified time after the procedure.

Q: What is the first step in treating spider veins?

A: The treatment begins with an initial consultation. Our staff will examine you, answer any questions you may have and develop a treatment plan. The plan will include anticipated results, an estimation of cost and the length of time required for treatment. Upon approval of the treatment program, you can schedule your first appointment.

Q: Who performs the treatment procedures for spider veins?

A: The Vein Center is staffed by board certified Radiologists with specialized vascular and interventional fellowship training, as well as a surgically trained vascular physician assistant. Care is provided by Board Certified Radiologists, A certified Physician Assistant, a Radiology Practitioner Assistant, and dedicated Vascular Ultrasound Technicians.

Q: How many treatments are usually required? And how far apart?

A: Treatments vary from patient to patient but as little as 1 treatment session or up to 4 sessions may be required. These are scheduled 6 weeks apart to allow your veins time to resolve so we can determine if any further treatment is required.

Q: After vein treatment, when can I return to normal activity?

A: Although recovery from vein treatment varies from patient to patient, there is typically no downtime. Patients can resume normal activities almost immediately. Minor bruising or swelling may occur, but should gradually fade within a week or so.

Q: Can I continue to exercise after treatment?

A: Absolutely! No special activity modifications are needed.

Q: Will my insurance pay for the treatment?

A: The initial consultation and any necessary testing are usually covered by your insurance. Many insurance plans including Medicare, will cover the treatment for the larger varicose veins. Many insurance companies consider the spider vein treatment cosmetic and do not cover that treatment.