



Sclerotherapy



Med Center Health®

WHAT ARE SPIDER VEINS?

Spider veins may appear as clusters of red, blue, or purple veins on the thighs, calves, or ankles—and they sometimes cause bothersome symptoms, such as aching, burning, swelling, and night cramps. Sclerotherapy is a relatively simple procedure that can help improve the appearance of your legs. During sclerotherapy treatment, spider veins are injected with a sclerosing solution that causes them to collapse and fade from view.



WHAT IS SCLEROTHERAPY?

Sclerotherapy is a vein treatment procedure used to treat varicose veins and spider veins. This minimally invasive varicose vein treatment uses a solution that is directly injected into the affected veins, which makes them collapse and eventually fade away. The injected solution is typically a chemical solution called a sclerosant which can effectively improve blood flow on the affected part.

During the procedure, Brian Grant, M.D. will use a fine needle to inject the sclerosant solution into the targeted veins. The treated vessels are glued together and sealed off as a result of the solution irritating their lining. Over time, the body naturally absorbs the sealed vein, and blood flow is rerouted through healthier veins.

RISKS OF SCLEROTHERAPY

Although serious medical complications from sclerotherapy are extremely rare when the procedure is performed by a board-certified vascular surgeon, they can occur. Risks include blood clots in the veins, severe inflammation, allergic reaction to the sclerosing solution, and skin injury that could leave a small scar.

DURING THE PROCEDURE

During your visit, your doctor will examine your legs and identify areas affected by spider veins or other problems. Your doctor will also check for signs of more serious deep vein problems. If any are discovered, you may need ultrasound testing for further evaluation. Larger vein problems must be treated before surface vein sclerotherapy can be performed successfully.

Sclerotherapy requires no anesthesia and is usually performed in a doctor's office. A typical sclerotherapy session lasts about 15 to 30 minutes.

During your treatment session, the skin over your spider veins will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution. Your doctor will inject the sclerosing agent into the affected veins—you may receive anywhere from 5 to 40 injections per treatment session. Although you will feel small needle sticks, and possibly a mild burning sensation, the pain is usually minimal. Please note that several treatments are usually required to get the best results.

RECOVERY AFTER SCLEROTHERAPY

You will have cotton balls and compression tape applied to the affected area following treatment. Your doctor may also prescribe tight-fitting compression stockings to guard against blood clots and promote healing. Keep in mind, the veins in your legs will look worse before they begin to look better. Your legs may be bruised or slightly discolored for some weeks afterward. In some cases, irregularities with pigmentation (brownish splotches) may take months or up to a year to completely fade.

Your doctor will ask you to walk around afterward to help prevent the formation of blood clots. Walking is also a great way to help your body heal after sclerotherapy. It increases blood flow and helps to reduce swelling. It is important to walk every day, even if it is just for a short time. How much you walk is up to you, but it is generally recommended to walk for at least 15 minutes, 2 - 3 times a day. If you can, try to walk for longer periods of time or increase the intensity of your walks. This will help your body to heal faster. You should be able to resume your normal activities the same day or the day after the procedure.

If you experience **marked discomfort** at any of the **injection sites** you should **remove** the stocking and dressing. The tape or the stocking may be the cause of the irritation and removing them may relieve the pain. If not, examine the site. Either way, please give us a **call** at **270-796-3535** so that we may advise you properly.

SPIDER VEINS may appear as **CLUSTERS** of red, blue, or purple veins on the **THIGHS, CALVES, or ANKLES**



DRESSING CARE AFTER YOUR PROCEDURE

- First 48 hours, leave the bandage and stocking in place and keep dry. If the bandage seems too tight, elevate the leg to decrease any swelling. If it continues to be uncomfortable, call your provider.
- After 48 hours, remove the bandage/stocking and showering is allowed.
- For 2 weeks, wear your compression stockings daily. Place them on as soon as you wake up and only remove them at bedtime.
- For 2 weeks, do not submerge the treated leg into water including NO baths, swimming pools, spas, or hot tubs.

HOW LONG IS THE RECOVERY PROCESS?

The sclerotherapy recovery process usually takes between 1 to 2 weeks, although the exact duration can vary depending on the size and location of the treated vein. For smaller veins, it may take only a few days to recover, while larger vessels could take 4 weeks or even longer.

In some cases, more than 1 treatment may be required for optimal results. It is best to discuss these expectations with your doctor before undergoing the procedure. With proper care and follow-up, most patients can expect satisfactory outcomes from sclerotherapy.



WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL FOR HELP?

Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You passed out (lost consciousness).
- You have severe trouble breathing.
- You have sudden chest pain and shortness of breath, or you cough up blood.

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You get open sores on your legs where the chemical was injected.
- You have symptoms of a blood clot in your leg (called deep vein thrombosis), such as:
 - Pain in the calf, back of the knee, thigh, or groin.
 - Swelling in the leg or groin.
 - A color change on the leg or groin. The skin may be reddish or purplish, depending on your usual skin color.
- You have problems with your vision or balance.
- You have pain that does not get better after you take pain medicine.
- You have signs of infection, such as:
 - Increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness.
 - Red streaks leading from the area of injection.
 - Pus draining from the area of injection.
 - A fever.



DO'S AND DON'TS AFTER SCLEROTHERAPY

After a sclerotherapy treatment, there are several restrictions and guidelines you are typically advised to follow. While these recommendations may vary depending on individual conditions and the specific instructions given by us, here are some common do's and don'ts to remember after the procedure:

DO'S:

Wear compression stockings: Follow your vein specialist's instructions regarding the duration and frequency of wearing compression stockings. They can help promote blood flow and reduce swelling, enhancing the effectiveness of the treatment. We advise keeping the stockings on for 48 hours. After removal, we recommend continuing to wear your compression stockings daily for the next 2 weeks. No need to sleep in compression stockings after the first 48 hours.

Have light exercises: Engage in light physical activities like walking to improve circulation. Moving your legs can help prevent blood clots and aid in the healing process especially if you have had your leg veins treated. We recommend walking a minimum of 2-3 times every day for at least 15 minutes each.

Take prescribed medications: If your specialist has prescribed any medications, such as pain relievers or antibiotics, take them as directed.

Keep injection sites clean: Keep the injection site clean and dry. Gently wash the area with mild soap and water, and pat it dry. Avoid scrubbing or using harsh chemicals on the treated skin.

Stay hydrated: Drink an adequate amount of water to keep your body hydrated and support the healing process.

Follow a healthy lifestyle: Maintain a balanced diet rich in nutrients to promote overall health and healing. Eat a variety of vegetables, fruits, lean meat, and grains.

Leg elevation: It is important to elevate your legs above your heart for at least 30 minutes. This helps to reduce swelling and bruising. When you elevate your legs above your heart's level, gravity forces the accumulated blood in your leg veins to flow towards your heart, thus alleviating pressure from your legs. As such, elevating your legs for 30 minutes a few times a day can improve the healing process.

DON'TS:



Avoid strenuous exercise: Engaging in heavy lifting (> 15 lbs), vigorous exercise, or activities that put excessive pressure on the treated veins should be avoided for a 4 - 5 days. Strenuous activities can increase blood pressure and hinder the healing process.



Avoid prolonged sitting or standing: Excessive sitting or standing for long periods can hinder blood circulation and increase the risk of complications. It's generally recommended to take short walks or breaks to keep the blood flowing and avoid prolonged periods of inactivity.



Avoid hot baths and saunas: Hot water can dilate blood vessels, which may interfere with the healing process. Avoid hot baths, hot tubs, saunas, or any other activities that expose your legs to excessive heat for 2 weeks after your procedure.



Avoid sun exposure: It is recommended to avoid excessive sun exposure to the treated areas, as they may be more sensitive to sunlight during the healing process. If you have to be outside during the daytime, apply sunscreen with a high SPF to prevent pigmentation changes or cover the treated areas with clothing. Also avoid tanning salons or self-tanning creams for approximately 6 weeks after your treatment.

Questions?
CALL (270)
796-3535

INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR SCLEROTHERAPY PROCEDURE

To make sure your procedure goes smoothly and effectively, please read these instructions before the day of your procedure.

DO

- Take a shower in the morning. You will not be taking your stockings off for 2 days.
- Take all your normal medications at their normal times.
- Arrive at the office 30 minutes prior to your appointment.
- Bring your compression stockings and loose-fitting shorts to the office on the day of your injections.

DO NOT

- Take aspirin, ibuprofen, or any blood thinners for two days before your procedure.
- Fast before your procedure.
- Shave or use lotion, cream or moisturizing soap on your legs on the day of the treatment.

You will be putting your compression stockings on after the injections. The injections cannot be done if you do not bring the stockings with you on the day of your treatment. You can purchase the stockings on the day of your injections if you do not have them with you. Although we have a very large supply of compression stockings, we may not always have your size.

ADDITIONAL POST-TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCLEROTHERAPY

1. After your session, your leg will be wrapped in an ACE bandage with taped compression balls underneath. Leave these bandages on for the first 24 hours.
2. You will be required to walk for approximately 10 to 30 minutes after your treatment.
3. After 24 hours, or the following morning, you may remove the ACE bandage and gently remove the taped compression pads prior to your shower. Normal activity is encouraged at this time, while wearing compression stockings.
4. Following the sclerotherapy session, you should wear compression stockings for 3 days if only small red vessels were treated, or 7 days if larger blue veins were treated. The more you wear your compression stockings, the better the results will be and the number of treatments may decrease. Remember, do not sleep in your compression stockings.
5. Avoid strenuous activities such as high impact aerobics, running, or leg exercises for 48 - 72 hours following your treatment. You may resume strenuous exercise 5 days after your treatment, as long as compression stockings are worn.
6. If re-treatment is necessary, it may be performed at 6 - 8 week intervals for previously treated areas (this gives your body time to heal and maximize improvements). Untreated areas may be treated weekly.
7. Bruising and discoloration are common after sclerotherapy. These issues will resolve after a number of weeks. It is very important to avoid sun exposure to the treatment areas, as sun exposure can cause hyperpigmentation (skin darkening) in the treated areas. It is recommended to wear broad spectrum sunblock and avoid prolonged direct sunlight for at least 2 weeks after treatment.
8. Do not be alarmed if larger treated veins become red or black, hard or tender. This is an expected result and means that the vein is shut and your body will absorb it. If a closed vein takes more than 4 weeks to reabsorb, you can schedule a 15 minute session for declotting.
9. Pain after sclerotherapy is usually minimal and goes away after 1 - 2 days. If you experience discomfort, you may take Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol. If you experience significant pain, redness, swelling, crusting, or bleeding, call our office immediately.
10. Avoid hot baths, hot tubs, and long hot showers for 2 weeks.
11. It is advised to avoid flying for 48 hours after the treatment of larger veins.





Board-certified vascular surgeon Brian Grant, M.D. offers advanced, minimally invasive treatment for varicose and spider veins through the Med Center Health Vein Clinic. He evaluates patients using the latest in ultrasound technology so that the best treatment options are chosen for you.

In addition to practicing at the Vein Clinic, Dr. Grant diagnoses, manages and treats a wide range of disorders and diseases that affect the arteries and veins throughout the body. He helps those suffering from vascular disease through surgical and minimally invasive procedures that improve circulation and allow an improved lifestyle.

MEDICAL SCHOOL

University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica

RESIDENCY

Howard University Hospital, Washington, DC, General Surgery

FELLOWSHIP

Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, VA, Vascular Surgery

Med Center Health Vein Clinic

Riverside Professional Center
825 E Second Avenue, Suite B2
Bowling Green, KY 42101

**If you have any questions about Sclerotherapy,
call 270-796-3535**

MedCenterHealth.org



Med Center Health®
Vein Clinic