

PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS PRIOR TO VEIN STRIPPING

- If you are taking any prescription blood-thinning agents such as Coumadin, you will need to stop taking the medication a few days before your procedure. Speak with your primary care provider regarding when to temporarily discontinue your medication.
- Please fill the prescription for compression stockings and/or pain medications prior to your surgery.

WHAT TO EXPECT THE DAY OF THE PROCEDURE:

- You will arrive to the hospital about 2 hours before surgery.
- Be sure not to eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery.
- The doctor will see you before you go into the operating room and map out the veins that will be stripped with a marking pen.
- You will be under general anesthesia during the surgery.
- During surgery, varicose veins will be tied off (ligation) and/or removed (stripped). Blood will flow through the healthy veins that remain.
- Your legs will be wrapped in compression bandages to control any bleeding or swelling.
- After surgery you will wake up in the recovery room where you will be closely watched and monitored by a nurse until you are ready to go home.
- Arrange for a friend or family member to drive you home after surgery.

POST-PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONS FOR VEIN STRIPPING:

The first 48 hours after the procedure:

- Wear ace bandages continually for 48 hours.
- It is important to keep your legs elevated whenever sitting or lying for the first two weeks, and especially the first 48 hours. This will help minimize swelling which can cause your legs to throb.
- Walk for at least 15 minutes every 1-2 hours while awake to prevent blood clots.
- An anti-inflammatory such as Indomethacin may be prescribed by your doctor. If so, take as directed for pain.
- Keep your diet light. There are no food restrictions, but be sure to get enough fluid without caffeine to prevent dehydration.
- Arrange for a family member or a friend to help you run errands or do household chores.
- Fever: Fever is common after surgery. If your temperature rises above 101.5 degrees then call your doctor.
- Constipation: Constipation is common after surgery. You may take a stool softener, such as Colace, Milk of Magnesium or prune juice to help. Take as directed on the bottle.
- Nausea: Nausea may occur after surgery. Be sure to take your pain medication on a full stomach. Stick to a soft bland diet for the first few days after surgery.

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After the first 48 hours:

- You may shower 48 hours after surgery. Remove the ace bandages and gauze. There will be sterile-strips (small pieces of tape) on your incisions. Leave the tape on while showering.
- Leave the sterile-strips on your incisions until they fall off on their own in approximately 7-10 days after surgery.
- Wear the ace wraps or compression stockings throughout the day until bruising resolves.
- Continue to elevate your legs whenever sitting or lying for the first two weeks.
- It is important to walk for 15 minutes every 1-2 hours to prevent blood clots.
- When prescription pain or anti-inflammatory medication is no longer required, Tylenol and/or Ibuprofen may be taken as needed for discomfort. Take as directed.
- You may return to work when you feel able. This is usually 1-3 weeks after the procedure, and depends on the amount of swelling you have, as well as the type of work you do.

THINGS TO AVOID:

- NO hot tubs or soaking in a hot bath for at least 1 week after the procedure.
- NO vigorous activity for the first 1-2 weeks after the procedure.
- Traveling long distances by car or air-plane should be avoided the first 3-7 days after the procedure. If traveling for more than 2 hours, stop and walk for 15-20 minutes every hour.