advanced vein center

Overview of Sclerotherapy

PATIENT INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS

WHAT IS SCLEROTHERAPY?

Sclerotherapy is an injection treatment used to eliminate small to medium size varicose veins and "spider" veins. "Spider" veins are superficial telangiectasias, tiny vessels that are red, blue or purple in color. The majority of these veins present as a cosmetic problem.

HOW DOES SCLEROTHERAPY WORK?

A very small needle is used to inject a sclerosing solution into a varicose or "spider" vein. Different solutions are used depending on the type of vein. Different strengths of the solutions are used based on the vessel. Once injected, the cells that line the vein wall (endothelium) will become irritated, inflamed and damaged. External compression is applied using cotton balls, paper tape and support hose. The compression causes the vein walls to seal together and the vein no longer can transport blood. Your body will then break down and absorb the damaged vein. When healing is complete the vein is no longer visible. The process is very similar to how your body heals a bad bruise. "Spider" veins do not have any useful function and eliminating them will not affect your circulation. Reducing or eliminating varicose veins can improve your circulation and symptoms of heaviness, aching and fatigue.

HOW MANY TREATMENTS ARE NEEDED?

The number of treatments needed varies from patient to patient depending on the type, size and quantity of veins to be treated. Varicose veins and "spider" veins may require multiple injection sessions. Subsequent treatments are usually scheduled every four to six weeks to allow time for the body to respond to the treatment. It is important to realize that the best results require patience. It takes time for your body to respond to the injections. It is important to follow the post-treatment instructions to optimize your results. Your body will continue to heal and "fade" injection sites for months after treatment.

After your initial screening exam, your doctor will give you an estimate as to the number of treatments that may be required. This is based on the provider's assessment, your history and expectations. You may end up needing fewer or more treatments than the surgeon estimated. It is important to discuss your expected outcomes with your doctor and to keep them realistic. Your doctor will do everything possible to meet or exceed your expectations.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Photographs will be taken before treatment is initiated. This helps to monitor your progress. Your legs will look worse before they look better. After the vein in damaged the body needs time to heal. Most people will notice a dramatic improvement approximately four weeks after their initial treatment. Maximal improvement often takes several months and several treatments. There is no guarantee sclerotherapy will be effective in every case. Some veins and areas will need to be retreated. Recurrence of the same vein treated rarely occurs with proper injection technique and compliance with post-treatment instructions.

New varicose veins or "spider" veins may form requiring subsequent treatment. Periodic re-evaluations are encouraged so that any new veins that develop can be injected before they become too large or too numerous.

see other side...

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A DIVISION OF OREGON SURGICAL SPECIALISTS, P.C.

520 Medical Center Drive, Suite 300 • Medford, Oregon 97504 Phone: 541-282-6680 Fax: 541-282-6681

Sclerotherapy – **Patient Instructions**

The following information will help you better prepare for your sclerotherapy procedure. Should you have any questions after reading this material, please call our office. It is important to us that you feel informed and sufficiently prepared.

PRIOR TO YOUR APPOINTMENT

- Avoid anti-inflammatory medications such as Advil or Aleve (Ibuprofen) or aspirin 7-10 days before the scheduled procedure.
- Please do not shave the night before or day of your procedure.
- Do not apply lotion to your legs the day of your procedure.
- Be sure to bring or wear loose fitting pants or sweat pants. You may also wear shorts.
- Bring the compression stockings that were prescribed for you as you will be wearing them out of the office.

WHAT TO EXPECT THE DAY OF THE PROCEDURE

- Please arrive 15 minutes before scheduled procedure time.
- Consent forms and photographs of veins will be added to your office record.
- Comfortable shorts will be provided for wear during the procedure.
- Although the procedure may cause some discomfort, it is usually well-tolerated.
- Cotton balls and paper tape will be applied to each injection site providing local compression.
- (Proper compression is very important because it minimizes the blood re-entering the injected vein, decreases the incidence of post sclerotherapy hyperpigmentation and telangiectatic matting and improves venous blood flow.)
- Your compression stockings or ace wraps will then be applied at the end of the procedure and worn home from the office.

POST PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONS

- Wear compression stockings continuously for the first 48 hours following your injection appointment. After that, you may remove the tape and cotton balls. Wear the stockings daily for at least 2 weeks, though 4-6 weeks is best for optimal results. Proper compression is very important because it minimizes the blood re-entering the injected area, decreases the incidence of post-sclerotherapy hyper-pigmentation and telangiectatic matting and it improves venous blood flow.
- You may shower after 48 hours. Hot baths, hot tubs and saunas should be avoided for 2 weeks after sclerotherapy to avoid venous dilation.
- Take Tylenol for any discomfort experienced. Avoid Advil (Ibuprofen), Aleve, aspirin or other anti-inflammatory medicines for at least 10 days. The inflammatory response is part of the treatment process.
- You may elevate your legs to improve your comfort level.
- Avoid sun exposure, including tanning booths for 4-6 weeks or until bruising or discoloration resolves.
- Apply sun block, should sun exposure be anticipated with normal daily activities.
- Watch for any signs of infection. Some redness is expected. If you develop progressively enlarging areas of redness or any drainage of pus please contact our office immediately at (541) 282-6680.
- Do not “pop” blisters. If you should develop a blister and it opens, simply allow it to dry. Wash gently with mild soap and water during your regular hygiene routine.
- Avoid high impact activities such as aerobics, leg weight lifting, jogging and running for 1-2 weeks after each injection treatment.
- Please be patient as you await the final result. You may think your legs look worse initially because of possible bruising, local swelling or blistering. Results can take several weeks to be appreciated.