

High Thigh Ligation



Ligation is the surgical tying of veins through a small incision in the skin to de-

crease the overall size of the vessel being treated for venous insufficiency. The procedure is done to treat and prevent the recurrence of varicose veins, and to reduce the size of the vein for a better closure rate when radiofrequency ablation or endovenous laser ablation is needed.

While ligation is more invasive than other available vein treatments, it may be the best option for the largest varicose veins that are greater than 1cm. This is typically done if there is evidence of valvular incompetence within the main veins that give rise to the varicose veins. Each patient is evaluated with ultrasound, and treatment will be individualized for the patient's circumstances.

1. What should I expect during the procedure?

The procedure is performed in the office under a sedative and a local anesthesia, and typically takes about an hour. The provider makes a small incision in the groin, and the vein is tied off. The cuts are closed with removable stitches, and a steri-strip or bandage is put over the area of the incision. Patients may receive a single dose of anti-

biotics to minimize the already-low risk of infection.

2. What do I need to do before my procedure?

Before the procedure, there will be an ultrasound examination to determine where the nonworking valves are located. Patients must discontinue any **prescription or over-the-counter medications** they are taking, as some may cause heavier bleeding during the procedure.

Patients should arrange for a ride home after the procedure. No restrictions are needed post procedure unless the provider determines that after the procedure is completed.

3. What do I need to do after my treatment?

Keep the leg **covered with bandages** for the first 48 hours. There may be a small amount of old blood or clear/beige/yellow discharge from the incisions. This is normal for the first couple of days.

Showering is permitted 24 hours after the procedure. Refrain from scrubbing over the incisions, and using strong soaps, chemicals (like alcohol), or cream over or near the incisions.

Return to normal activities as **quickly as is comfortable**. The leg will be sorer with more exercise.

Schedule a follow-up ultrasound approximately 3-7 days after the procedure.

4. What will my legs feel like?

There may be **aching pain** at the site of the ligation, which typically resolves over a few weeks – most people describe their legs as sore and uncomfortable at first. These symptoms may increase from the second post-operative day. The discomfort typically resolves around 3-10 days after the procedure.

The incisions will initially be very visible, but should almost disappear within 9-12 months. There is often extensive bruising in the leg, which lasts for 2-4 weeks.

Very rarely, there may be numbness and tingling if the nerve that runs along with the vein is irritated.

5. What are the possible side complications?

This is generally a very safe procedure, causing relatively little pain and, in most cases, is well-tolerated. However, as with any surgical procedure, there are risks. Complications after vein ligation are uncommon, but may include:

- **Chest infections**, particularly in smokers, which may require treatment with antibiotics

- **Wound infections**, which also may require antibiotic treatment
- **Fluid leak from the wound**, possibly lasting a few days
- **Nerve injuries** occur in about 5 percent of cases, and are rarely a problem in the long term. Reduced sensation diminishes with time.
- **Deep vein thrombosis** is rare, but may occur during varicose vein surgery.
- **Recurrent varicose veins** occur in about 1 in 15 patients over 10 years, sometimes requiring further treatment.

Patients with severe adverse reactions should call the office immediately.



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