

Sclerotherapy



Please read through the information carefully. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Keep this information to review the before and after treatment instructions before each sclerotherapy treatment session.

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. Reticular varicose veins are varicose veins 1-3 mm in diameter. Most 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 strengths of the solutions are used based on the size of the vessel. Once injected, the cells that line the vein wall (endothelium) will become irritated, inflamed and damaged. External compression is applied utilizing a support hose. The compression caused the vein walls to seal together, and the vein no longer transports 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 our 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 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 provider estimated. It is important to discuss your expected outcomes with your provider and to keep them realistic.

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 is damaged, the body needs time to heal. Most people

will notice a dramatic improvement approximately four weeks after their initial treatment. Maximum improvement often takes several months and several treatments. There is no guarantee that 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 large or numerous.

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS:

ITCHING: You may experience itching around the area injected. If this occurs, it is usually mild and lasts for one to two days.

HYPERPIGMENTATION: A light brown discoloration of the skin may develop along the vein in the area injected. Approximately 20-30% of patients treated note the discoloration, which is lighter and less obvious than the vein being treated. The hyper-pigmentation usually fades in a couple weeks, but may take several months to a year to totally resolve. There is a one-percent incidence of hyper-pigmentation. Try to avoid sun exposure for 6 weeks following a treatment. It is highly recommended that a sun block of at least 45spf be used. A small amount of blood may become trapped and hardened in the vein when injected varicose veins or some spider vein complexes. This may feel like a knot or cord and it may look dark blue or bruised. This is a common occurrence. You may need to return before your next treatment so the area can be drained to remove the trapped blood. This will reduce the hyper-pigmentation that can occur. The chance of this occurring can be decreased with proper compression of the vein and the use of compression hose after your treatment.

TELEANGIECTATIC MATTING: The formation of new, fine spider veins in the area injected occurs in approximately 10% of patients injected. The exact reason for this occurring is unknown. If untreated, the matting usually resolves in three to twelve months, but very rarely it can become permanent. If the matting does not fade, it can be re-injected or treated with a laser light source.



PAIN: It is common to have some tenderness at the injection site. Injection of the sclerosing agent can be uncomfortable, but is usually well tolerated by most patients. The discomfort is temporary, lasting one to at most seven days. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be used if needed, according to product directions.



BRUISING: May occur at the injection site. Bruising may be minimized by avoiding Aspirin and ibuprofen products for ten days before and after each session.

RARE SIDE EFFECTS:

ULCERATION AT INJECTIONS SITE: Very rarely a small ulcer will occur at the site where the vein is injected. An ulcer can take four to six weeks to completely heal. A small scar may result.

ALLERGIC REACTION: There is a very rare incidence of an allergic reaction to the solution injected. You will be observed for such a reaction, and will be treated appropriately should it occur. Please inform us of any allergic history.

PULMONARY EMBOLUS/DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS: A blood clot to the lungs or a blood clot in the deep vein. In medical literature there is an extraordinarily low incidence of this complication.

ALTERNATIVES TO SCLEROTHERAPY: You may choose no therapy. The existing varicose and spider vein may progress, and new veins may form. You should be re-evaluated periodically to monitor your condition for changes. You may choose to wear compression support hose (if this is an appropriate treatment for your problem). Compression hose promotes venous blood return to the heart. If support hose is worn faithfully, symptoms such as aching, heaviness and tiredness are often alleviated. It also may help preclude the progression and formulation of varicose and spider veins.

SCLEROTHERAPY PRE-TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS:

LOTION: Please lotion any area that will be treated with a lotion of your choice.

COMPRESSION HOSE: Is required to be worn immediately after each injection treatment. You cannot be injected without your compression hose. The hose must be worn continuously 24 hours a day and for 3 days. It may be removed to be laundered, preferably at night while you are inactive. Your provider may adjust the length of time to wear your hose. The compression hose is critical to the success of the treatment.

CLOTHING: Bring a pair of loose, comfortable shorts to wear during your treatment. Dress in loose clothes and comfortable shoes to accommodate the hose after your treatment.

MEDICATION: Take your daily medication as prescribed.

TIME ALLOTMENT: A sclerotherapy treatment should last approximately 45-60 minutes. You should arrive 10-15 minutes early for your first sclero treatment to allow time for photographs and to sign your consents. You should then allow an additional 10 minutes to apply your support hose, get dressed, and to check out of the office. If you need to cancel or reschedule your sclerotherapy treatment, please give our office at least 48 hours notice.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Photographs will be taken before your first treatment to document progress and/or for the purpose of medical education, research, scientific publication or educational presentations. You will not be identified in the photographs, and informed consent will be obtained before you are photographed.

SCLEROTHERAPY POST TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS:

COMPRESSION: You will need to put the compression hose on immediately after your treatment. Proper compression is very important because it minimizes the blood re-entering the injected vein, decreases the

incidence of post sclerotherapy hyper-pigmentation and telangiectatic matting and improves venous blood flow. The hose should be worn for 24 hours a day continuously for 3 days. They may be removed to launder, preferably at night when you are inactive. You may choose to wear them longer if you would like.

BATHING: A shower is allowed after the first 24 hours. Hot baths, hot tubs and saunas should be avoided for two weeks after sclerotherapy to avoid venous dilatation.

MASSAGE/PEDICURES: You may resume massages and or pedicures 5-7 days post treatment as you are able to tolerate them. You may feel lumps in the veins that were treated. You may want to inform your therapist that this is a normal occurrence following sclerotherapy.

HYPERPIGMENTATION: If you develop hyperpigmentation after sclerotherapy (a brown area that follows the vein path), you should apply sunblock to those areas when sun exposure is anticipated to avoid increasing hyper pigmentation. Continue to use sun block until the hyperpigmentation has resolved. If the vein areas that have been treated become lumpy, sore, and/or brown, an incision and drainage (I&D) may be done to decrease the areas tenderness, lumpiness and discoloration. A needle is inserted into the areas, and the trapped blood that is causing the discomfort and discoloration will be pushed out. This will ease the tenderness and lighten the discoloration. Multiple I&D's may be recommended.

DRIVING: You may drive immediately after your treatment. If your trip home is longer than an hour we recommend you stop hourly to stretch your legs.

ACTIVITY: In most cases, you may return to work and resume normal activity after treatment. Avoid high impact aerobics, jogging, running, leg weightlifting and sit-ups for 3 days after each injection treatment.

MEDICATIONS: Continue taking your prescribed medications. You may take any pain medication that you feel is needed.

FOLLOW-UP: Subsequent treatments are usually every four to six weeks. Your provider will advise you when you should return. If you notice dark knots or cords at your injection sites, please call our office. You may need to return sooner to have these areas aspirated. Remember it is important to call our office if you have any questions or concerns. Please keep your follow up appointment after treatment. If you need to cancel or reschedule any appointments, please give our office at least 24 hours notice. 920.233.1540.