

SCLEROTHERAPY

INFORMATION

Sclerotherapy effectively treats varicose and spider veins. It is often considered the treatment of choice for small varicose veins. Sclerotherapy involves injecting a solution directly into the vein. The solution causes the vein to scar and collapse forcing blood to reroute through healthier veins. The collapsed vein is reabsorbed into local tissue and eventually fades.

After Sclerotherapy, treated veins tend to fade within a few weeks although occasionally it may take up to a month to see the full results. In some instances, several treatment sessions may be required.

Sclerotherapy is performed for cosmetic purposes, to improved the appearance of varicose and spider veins. The procedure can also improve related symptoms such as swelling, aching, burning and night cramps.

If you are pregnant, it is recommended that you wait until after delivery to have sclerotherapy.

Temporary Side effects:

- Bruising
- Raised red areas
- Small skin sores
- Darkened skin in the form of lines or spots
- Multiple tiny red blood vessels

Side effects that may require treatment:

- Inflammation—this is usually mild but may cause swelling, warmth and discomfort around the injection site. Your doctor may suggest aspirin or antibiotics to reduce inflammation.
- Blood Clot—A lump of clotted blood may form in a treated vein that may require drainage. Rarely, a blood clot may travel to a deeper vein in your leg (deep vein thrombosis). DVT carries a risk of pulmonary embolism, this is an emergency situation.

Seek URGENT medical care if you experience difficulty breathing, chest pain or dizziness or you cough up blood.

- Air bubbles—Tiny air bubbles may rise in your bloodstream. These don't always cause symptoms, if they do, symptoms include visual disturbances, headache, coughing and nausea. These symptoms usually go away but call Dr Garbowski if you experience problems with limb movement or sensation after the procedure.
- Allergic reaction—It is possible that you may have an allergic reaction to the solution used for the treatment, this is very uncommon.

SCLEROTHERAPY

INFORMATION

How to Prepare

Before the procedure, Dr Garbowski performs a physical exam and gathers your medical history.

- Evaluate your affected veins
- Check for any underlying blood vessel disease
- Medical History—Dr Garbowski will enquire about any recent illnesses or existing conditions such as heart condition.
- Medications or supplements, especially Aspirin, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, blood thinners or antibiotics
- Allergies
- Smoking or oral contraceptive use, these can increase your risk of blood clots
- Previous treatments or procedures

The day prior to your procedure

- Avoid shaving or applying any lotion to your legs
- Wear loose clothing to your appointment, consider shorts so that your legs are exposed.
- Please ensure that your compression stockings have been obtained and tried on at home
- Please bring your stockings to the appointment , these will be fitted directly after treatment.

What you can expect

Sclerotherapy is completed in Dr Garbowski rooms and doesn't require anaesthesia, it generally takes less than half an hour to complete.

During the procedure

After cleansing the area, Dr Garbowski will use a fine needle to slowly inject the solution into the appropriate veins. The solution works by irritating the lining of the vein causing it to swell shut and block the flow of blood. Eventually the vein will become scar tissue and disappear.

You may experience minor stinging or cramps when the needle is inserted into the vein. Once the needle is withdrawn, Dr Garbowski applies compression and massages the area to disperse the solution. A compression pad may be taped to the injection site while the doctor moves onto the next vein.

After the procedure

Immediately following the procedure, you rest, Dr Garbowski checks the injection sites for immediate side effects. You are then encouraged to walk and move around, this is important to prevent the formation of blood clots.

SCLEROTHERAPY

INFORMATION

After the procedure cont...

Dr Garbowski will assist you to fit the compression stockings, these are to be worn for a period of two weeks and greatly aid the healing process. Dr Garbowski will advise how long immediately following the Sclerotherapy treatment that you will be required to wear the stockings. Subsequently, the stockings are to be worn during the day only for 14 days unless otherwise advised and should be removed at night prior to bed to allow your legs to rest.

Most people return to their normal activities on the same day.

What to avoid after your procedure:

- Do not sit with your knees bent or with your legs crossed at the knee—instead, sit with your legs elevated and flex your feet at regular intervals.
- Do not drive the day of your procedure or until you are pain free and confident to be in full control of your vehicle.
- Do not lift, push or drag anything heavy for at least one to two (1-2) weeks.
- Do not wear constrictive clothing, for example tight jeans or pants.
- Avoid sun exposure to the treated areas, inflammation which can be caused by the injections combined with sun exposure can lead to dark spots on your skin.

What to do:

- Take short frequent walks increasing the distance gradually. Walking and moving your legs is important to prevent the formation of blood clots.

Results

If you were treated for small varicose veins or spider veins, you can usually expect to see definitive results in three to six weeks. Larger veins may require three to four months. Treated veins generally don't come back however, new veins may appear.

Dr Garbowski will schedule a follow up visit within 4-6 weeks of your procedure to check the procedures success and decide whether further sessions may be required.

Studies of sclerotherapy treatment for varicose and spider veins indicate that it has an overall success rate of 50-80% in eliminating treated veins.