

VARICOSE VEINS

INFORMATION

Varicose veins are swollen veins that can be seen through the skin, often appearing as blue, bulging and twisted veins just beneath the skin's surface (superficial veins of the legs). They are caused by the veins stretching and the valves within the veins weakening due to increased periods of standing or sitting which cause blood to 'pool' and the venous blood pressure to increase, as the body works harder to pump blood against gravity and back towards the heart.

Varicose veins can cause aching and feelings of fatigue in the lower limbs particularly feet and calves and when left untreated, are likely to worsen over time.

Severe cases of varicose veins can lead to an increased risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT), a serious condition requiring urgent medical attention.

Women are more likely to develop varicose veins than men, and smoking, lack of exercise, as well as being overweight are also contributing factors.

Surgical treatment of Varicose Veins

This procedure requires an incision to be made in the groin and a smaller incision to be made lower in the leg that allows a small metal or plastic rod to be inserted through the incompetent vein to remove the damaged section of vein. This part of the procedure is commonly known as "vein stripping".

The Surgeon will tie the vein prior to cutting it, to stop the blood flow (high ligation) and the associated varicose veins will be removed separately using a hook-like tool and by making a series of incisions into the affected veins (multiple phlebectomies or multiple stab avulsions).

A general anaesthetic is required for this procedure.

Usually patients remain in hospital overnight and require to wear compression stockings for at least two weeks post operatively.

Open varicose veins surgery has a long history and has been performed for more than 50 years.

It offers a reliable solution but requires significantly longer time to recover and return to normal activities.

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Side effects:

- Swelling which may take a few weeks to disappear. This is most likely on the feet and ankles.
- Scarring, although, scars tend to be less noticeable than the varicose veins were. The scars will also fade with time
- Brown staining of the skin, although, this tends to fade with time
- Pain, swelling and bruising in the skin and calf muscle

Complications:

- Infection, particularly if you had skin ulcers
- Blood clots forming within deep veins
- Bleeding or bruising

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

Please note: **Opening Hours:** from 8.30am – 4pm Monday to Thursday and from 9am – 12pm on Friday

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office on 9382 9100, or email us at reception@perthvascularclinic.com.au.

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