

Sclerotherapy for Varicose Veins and Spider Veins

What is Sclerotherapy?

Sclerotherapy is a minimally invasive procedure used to treat varicose veins and spider veins. Under ultrasound guidance, a special solution called a sclerosant is injected directly into the affected vein. The solution irritates the inside lining of the vein, causing it to collapse and seal shut. Over time, the treated vein is naturally absorbed by the body. Blood is then redirected through healthier veins.

Why is Sclerotherapy Performed?

Sclerotherapy may be recommended to:

- Improve the appearance of spider veins and varicose veins
- Reduce symptoms such as aching, heaviness, burning, throbbing, or swelling
- Treat small to medium-sized varicose veins
- Improve discomfort related to chronic venous insufficiency

Before the Procedure

Please tell your doctor if you:

- Are pregnant or breastfeeding
- Have a history of blood clots or deep vein thrombosis (DVT)
- Have allergies to medications
- Take blood thinners or aspirin
- Have recently been unwell

Preparation

- Avoid applying lotions or oils to the legs on the day of treatment
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing
- Bring your compression stockings if instructed
- Continue walking and normal activity unless advised otherwise

During the Procedure

- The skin is cleaned with antiseptic solution
- A very fine needle is inserted into the vein
- The sclerosant solution is injected into the vein
- Multiple veins may be treated during one session
- The procedure usually takes 15–45 minutes

You may experience:

- Mild stinging or burning during injection
 - Minor cramping or pressure
- Most patients tolerate the procedure very well.

After the Procedure

Normal Effects

It is common to experience:

- Mild bruising
- Redness or tenderness
- Temporary swelling
- Firmness or lumpiness along the treated vein
- Brown discoloration of the skin

These effects usually improve over several weeks.

Compression Stockings

You may be asked to wear compression stockings for several days to weeks after treatment. These help improve healing and reduce the risk of complications.

Activity

You should:

- Walk regularly after the procedure
- Continue light activities
- Avoid prolonged standing initially

You should avoid for several days:

- Strenuous exercise
- Hot baths or saunas
- Excessive sun exposure to treated areas

Benefits of Sclerotherapy

- Minimally invasive treatment
- No general anaesthetic required
- Usually performed in a clinic setting
- Minimal downtime
- Can improve symptoms and cosmetic appearance

Risks and Complications

Sclerotherapy is generally very safe, but complications can occur.

Common Risks

- Bruising
- Temporary discomfort
- Skin staining or pigmentation
- Small trapped blood clots
- Temporary swelling

Rare Risks

- Allergic reaction
- Skin ulceration
- Infection
- Deep vein thrombosis (DVT)
- Visual disturbance or migraine-like symptoms
- Stroke or transient ischaemic attack (very rare)

Seek urgent medical attention if you experience:

- Severe leg swelling
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Significant redness or warmth

How Effective is Sclerotherapy?

Sclerotherapy is highly effective for spider veins and many small varicose veins. Multiple treatment sessions may be required.

New veins can develop over time because venous disease is a chronic condition.

Follow-Up

A follow-up appointment may be arranged to:

- Assess healing
- Review treatment results
- Determine if additional sessions are needed

Questions?

If you have any concerns before or after your procedure, please contact your treating doctor or clinic.