EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT:

Varicose and Spider Veins

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Varicose Veins

Varicose veins are abnormally dilated or bulging leg veins that vary in both extent and size. They are usually caused by faulty valves in the main leg veins.

While varicose and spider veins occur in both sexes, they are more common in women, and can develop at any age. Frequently, the problem is cosmetic, although these veins can cause leg fatigue, throbbing, and pain. If left untreated, further complications can occur.

There are two main types of veins in the legs: the deep veins and the superficial veins. The normal direction of blood flow is upwards from the leg veins towards the heart. This direction of flow against the force of gravity is maintained by one-way valves. The deep veins are essential for normal circulation in the legs. The superficial veins are not needed for this purpose, as long as the deep veins function normally.

The main superficial vein in the leg is called the saphenous vein. It extends along the inner aspect of the leg from the ankle to the groin. This vein has many superficial branches which are normally not seen because they are small and collapsed.

Varicose veins occur when the one-way valves in the saphenous vein fail and blood is allowed to flow backwards into the superficial venous branches. When this condition persists for some time, blood pools in these veins, especially in the standing and sitting positions. These superficial veins then lose their elasticity and become permanently dilated, or “varicose.”

Spider Veins

Spider veins are thin veins which are easily visible through the skin and do not usually bulge. Frequently they occur in spider-like configurations which can be extensive and vary in color combinations of red, blue and purple. People with spider veins often seek treatment for cosmetic reasons. Some also complain of related symptoms such as burning pain, cramps or fatigue.

Why do these veins occur?

The cause for valve failure and abnormal veins is often unknown. Some commonly related factors are:

- Heredity
- Continuous standing or sitting
- Certain hormones in women (estrogens)
- Pregnancy
- Birth control pills
- Prior phlebitis (inflammation associated with clots)
- Lack of exercise
- Obesity
- Direct trauma
Compressions Stockings
The most conservative treatment, and usually the first attempted method. They should be worn every day during waking hours to compress the veins and prevent them from bulging while the stockings are on.

Microphlebectomy
This procedure is also performed under local anesthesia. It involves removing the remaining varicose veins through small puncture wounds with the use of special vein hooks. This treatment is often performed at the same time as EVLT® to obtain the best results. It can also be done as a separate procedure depending on the particular patient and the initial evaluation.

Endovenous Laser Treatment (EVLT®)
EVLT® is a minimally invasive laser procedure which is performed in the office under local anesthesia. This treatment is used to eliminate the main vein (usually the saphenous vein) which causes the bulging varicose veins. A thin laser fiber is placed into the vein through a small puncture wound, usually in the thigh. The laser is directed under ultrasound guidance and Laser energy is applied to seal the vein. A compression stocking is applied at the end of the procedure. Normal activity can be resumed right away with little or no pain.

Injection Sclerotherapy
This technique is used for the treatment of spider veins. It involves the injection of a special solution into the veins through tiny needles. A compression bandage is then applied for a short period of time to keep the veins collapsed. The veins gradually disappear. Some veins require more than one set of injections for complete elimination. Every patient is encouraged to be active and engage in normal activities. During sclerotherapy, there is minimal to no pain because of the very fine needles used for the injections.

The results of laser therapy and injection sclerotherapy are very good to excellent and are superior to other methods. Patients who have had other forms of treatment for their veins prefer our method. They usually experience the relief of symptoms soon after receiving our treatment and are very pleased with the final cosmetic result.

CALL OUR OFFICE FOR A VASCULAR CONSULTATION.
Prior to Treatment

The initial consultation for patients with problem veins includes a complete history and physical examination.

In addition non-invasive diagnostic testing is required. These tests are done in our center. We perform soundwave studies (Doppler exams) as well as direct imaging (Duplex scanning) of the superficial and deep leg veins. These tests enable us to accurately evaluate the function of the veins and the venous valves.

We can then determine the best treatment for you.

Untreated Veins

People often seek treatment for varicose and spider veins because they become unsightly. In addition these veins can cause many symptoms and complications such as:

- Pain, cramps, throbbing
- Heaviness, fatigue, burning
- Swelling
- Increased symptoms during menstrual period and pregnancy
- Superficial phlebitis (inflammation caused by clots)
- Skin discoloration or pigmentation
- Skin ulcers or open wounds
- Veins rupturing through the skin, causing bleeding

Will treated veins recur?

The predisposition to develop varicose or spiders may not change after treatment. Therefore new veins may appear. That is why follow-up examinations are important. Some patients require touch-up treatments in the future.
Symptoms of PAD

- Leg or hip pain during walking
- Leg weakness or fatigue
- Leg numbness or tingling
- Burning or aching pain in the feet or toes
- Ulcers or sores that won’t heal
- Cold legs or feet
- Discoloration
- Loss of leg hair

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has cared for the vascular disease problems of our community since 1977, delivering the most current vascular treatments to our patients throughout Long Island. Dr. Anker, one of the Island’s leading vascular surgeons and a recognized expert in the field of vascular surgery, and his staff are here to provide you with the highest level of care. We hope that you find this brochure informative and that we can help you lead a healthier life!

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