

Unightly Leg Veins

The Condition

Spider veins - known in the medical world as telangiectasias or sunburst varicosities - are small, thin veins that lie close to the surface of the skin. Although these super-fine veins are connected with the larger venous system, they are not an essential part of it.

A number of factors contribute to the development of spider veins, including heredity, pregnancy and other events that cause hormonal shifts, weight gain, occupations or activities that require prolonged sitting or standing, and the use of certain medications.

Spider veins usually take on one of three basic patterns. They may appear in a true spider shape with a group of veins radiating outward from a dark central point; they may be arborizing and will resemble tiny branch-like shapes; or they may be linear and appear as thin separate lines. Linear spider veins are commonly seen on the inner knee, whereas the arborizing pattern often appears on the outer thigh in a sunburst or cartwheel distribution.

Varicose veins - differ from spider veins in a number of ways. Varicose veins are larger - usually more than a quarter-inch in diameter, darker in color and tend to bulge. Varicose veins are also more likely to cause pain and be related to more serious vein disorders.

Vascular-specific Laser Treatment

Vascular Lesions

The Condition

These lesions are caused by blood vessels which become enlarged (port-wine stains) or when too many blood vessels grow in an area (hemangiomas.)

The most common vascular lesions as a follows:

Hemangioma

A common type of vascular birthmark that involves different types of blood vessel growths. Hemangiomas become visible within the first few weeks of life and continue to grow rapidly for about one year. There are two common types of hemangiomas:

- strawberry hemangiomas - a slightly raised and strawberry-red mark that develops shortly after birth and may occur anywhere on the body.
- cavernous hemangiomas - a bluish-colored mark that develops shortly after birth and can occur anywhere on the body.

Port-Wine Stains

Also called a nevus flammeus, is a flat, pink, red, or purple mark that appears at birth, often on the face, arms, and legs. It continues to grow as the child grows.

Port-wine stains do not go away and often require treatment if located on the eyelid or forehead (like on Mikhail Gorbachev's.)

The Effect

Smooth the face and smooth fine wrinkles using a carbon dioxide (CO₂) laser device that treats layers of damaged skin. Softens lines around the eyes and mouth and minimizes facial

scars and unevenly pigmented areas.

The Procedure

Sometimes called "laser peel," a carbon dioxide (CO2) laser is used to remove areas of damaged or wrinkled skin, layer by layer. Laser resurfacing is most commonly used to minimize the appearance of fine lines, especially around the mouth and the eyes. It is also effective in treating facial scars or areas of uneven pigmentation. Often, the procedure is done in conjunction with another cosmetic operation, such as a facelift or eyelid surgery.

Best candidates

This treatment is appropriate for the patient who has minimal to moderate facial wrinkles, blotchiness or dark under eye circles.

Risks

All surgery carries risk, and you should be fully aware of the medical risks associated with this procedure before you consent to surgery. Your surgeon will discuss these risks with you during your consultation, and you are encouraged to ask questions if there is anything you do not understand. [More details about your consultation.](#)

You will be required to sign a consent form before surgery stating that you have been informed of the risks involved; that you understand those risks; and that you accept those risks. This is standard hospital protocol and surgery will not be performed if you do not sign.. [More details about the required forms.](#)

It is your obligation to inform your surgeon of key medical information that may influence the outcome of your surgery or may increase the level of risk. These include medications you are taking, history of disease, medical complications, etc.

Risks and risk rates vary from patient to patient depending on a range of factors. No two people are alike. **The risks listed below are possible risks associated with this type of surgery and are mentioned regardless of how remote the possibility:**

Temporary swelling, discomfort. Lightening of treated skin. Acute sun sensitivity. Increased sensitivity to makeup. Pinkness or redness in skin that may persist for up to 6 months.

Treatment

Time required: A few minutes to 1 hour. May require more than 1 session. Usually outpatient, unless combined with other surgical procedures that require hospitalization.

Anesthesia: Local, numbing spray, or general.

Side effects

Temporary swelling, discomfort. Lightening of treated skin. Acute sun sensitivity. Increased sensitivity to makeup. Pinkness or redness in skin that may persist for up to 6 months.

Recovery time:

Back to work: [2 weeks.](#)

More strenuous activities: [4 to 6 weeks.](#)

Fading of redness: [about 3 months.](#)

Return of pigmentation/sun exposure: [6 to 12 months.](#)

Sclerotherapy

The Effect

Today, many plastic surgeons are treating spider veins with sclerotherapy. In this rather simple procedure, veins are injected with a sclerosing solution, which causes them to collapse and fade from view. The procedure may also remedy the bothersome symptoms associated with spider veins, including aching, burning, swelling and night cramps.

The Procedure

Sclerotherapy sessions are relatively quick, lasting only about 15 to 45 minutes. Using one hand to stretch the skin taut, your doctor or nurse will begin injecting the sclerosing agent into the affected veins. Bright, indirect light and magnification help ensure that the process is completed with maximum precision.

Best Candidates

- Women of any age may be good candidates for sclerotherapy, but most fall in the 30-to-60 category.
- Spider veins in men aren't nearly as common as they are in women. Men who do have spider veins often don't consider them to be a cosmetic problem because the veins are usually concealed by hair growth on the leg. However, sclerotherapy is just as effective for men who seek treatment.

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Treatment

Time required: 15 - 45 minutes

Anesthesia: none

Side effects

Clots forming in the deep veins of the legs.

Recovery time

Although you probably won't want to wear any leg-baring fashions for about two weeks, your activity will not be significantly limited in any other way from sclerotherapy treatment.

A one-month healing interval must pass before you may have your second series of injections in the same site. After each treatment, you will notice further improvement of your legs' appearance.

Your Consultation

Your physician consultation is very important, because it is the moment when you can discuss your medical issues face-to-face with your doctor. If you are traveling from overseas, this will be the first time you meet with your doctor so it critical that he/she understands:

- Your medical needs
- Your expectations
- Your medical history

Most people have a good idea of what the procedure or outcome they want ("I want smaller breasts"), and the physician's responsibility is to listen and then explain what can be done, the procedures or techniques to achieve your objectives, and the risks and costs involved.

You will have a lot of questions to ask, so preparation is key to make the most of your consultation. We suggest that you:

- Write your questions down to make sure you remember them
- Come with your medical history/survey already completed
- Bring any photos or visuals aids that will help explain what it is you want or expect from treatment

Please note that this information should be used only as a guide to your treatment. All specifics will be discussed with your Physician at your consultation.