

## Sclerotherapy For Spider Veins

### What are “Spider Veins”?

These are the small, dilated veins seen frequently on the thighs, around the knees, on the calves, and around the ankles.

### Do they serve a purpose?

No, spider veins simply represent a dilation of surface vessels due to increased pressure in the deeper veins. They are not necessary for circulation. Their only significance is their unsightly cosmetic appearance.

### How are spider veins treated?

Treatment, known as *Sclerotherapy*, consists of injecting a solution (sclerosant) into these small veins, which produces irritation to the veins, causing them to clamp shut and eventually be dissolved by your body.

### How well does this treatment work?

Although results may vary depending on the patient, Sclerotherapy is usually very successful in improving the appearance of the legs. Often the veins will completely go away’ occasionally, they will only lighten. It may take six to eight weeks and several treatment sessions before seeing a response.

### Does treatment need to be repeated?

Yes. Sometimes, treatment may be necessary for up to one full year before the majority of these small veins have all resolved. Periodic maintenance therapy may be necessary for any new veins that develop over the years.

### What can I expect from treatment?

1. A very thin gauge needle is utilized to inject the solution directly into these small veins; minimal discomfort is involved in actually inserting the needle into these veins.
2. During the injection, you may experience some discomfort, such as leg cramps, or mild pain at the site of injection, especially when the veins around the ankles are injected.
3. Afterwards, you may resume your normal activities, except that we do ask that you avoid vigorous exercise the day of the treatment. You may remove the support hose in 12 hours. The cotton balls and tape may be removed after 24 hours.
4. Initially the veins will be more noticeable with subsequent fading over 3-4 weeks. Repeat sessions therefore are recommended at 6 week intervals.

## **Are there side effects?**

Sometimes, as the veins begin to go away, they leave brown marks known as hyperpigmentation. The hyperpigmentation generally fades in 2-4 months, but may last longer. Another rare occurrence is the development of an ulcer, or skin sore, at the site of injection of the solution. These usually heal without difficulty, but may leave behind a small scar. A few patients have reported mild tenderness or soreness of the treated areas lasting for 1-3 days.

## **What should I know before treatment?**

Please bring or wear shorts the day of treatment. We advise that you not shave your legs the day of treatment due to the fact that this may cause increased stinging or burning when the area is cleaned with alcohol. Also, lotion should not be applied to your legs the day of treatment.

It is imperative that you bring a pair of support hose with you to wear when you leave your treatment session. These will need to be worn for 4 to 5 days following the treatment. They may be removed at bedtime.