

Advice To Patients - Sclerotherapy

Treatment for thread veins of the legs

Sclerotherapy is a safe and well established treatment for thread veins on the legs. Although there are a number of alternative treatments, it remains the most reliably successful of them all.

What causes thread veins and varicose veins?

50% of the population will develop problems with their leg veins during their life. In most cases there is a family history so the cause is likely to be genetic. Women in particular find the appearance of thread veins quite distressing but can be reassured that: a) though unsightly they are unlikely to cause symptoms or medical problems and, b) they can be treated and their appearance significantly improved.

This clinic offers a thorough assessment and diagnosis of your thread veins to exclude underlying problems in order to offer the best treatment option for you. A brief Ultrasound scan is performed at no extra charge as necessary.

What is sclerotherapy?

Sclerotherapy involves injections with a very tiny needle of a solution, very superficially, into the thread veins, causing the lining of the veins to swell and break down. Compression is then applied to close the veins. Over time the body treats the veins as injured and absorbs them so they fade away.

What results can I expect?

The results are not immediate. The veins look worse before they get better and most patients see a 60% to 80% improvement in the appearance of the veins after about 12 weeks. Everyone's body reacts at different speeds to fade the veins. Several treatments are usually needed and most clients require between 1 and 4 visits. In rare cases the treatment has little or no effect. Results cannot be guaranteed.

Are the results permanent?

The veins that are successfully treated will not recover but this is a treatment for the symptoms, not a cure for the underlying causes so new veins sometimes develop over time.

Is this a safe treatment?

This is a very safe treatment, but as with any other treatment, not entirely without risk. This treatment is not suitable for everyone. Your practitioner will take a medical history and discuss the possible risks and complications with you prior to treatment.

The 2 most common side effects are haemosiderin deposition (iron pigments leak from the vein staining the skin brown over the vein), and telangiectatic matting (looks like a blush or small red bruise).

The brown marks are not usually permanent but may take 6-18 months to fade. With good compression, avoiding exposure to the sun and tanning, the risk is kept to a minimum. The telangiectatic matting can sometimes occur after initial injections and usually disappear completely after 6-12 months, but if it persists, can be treated in subsequent visits.

Other risks are extremely rare but include the allergic reaction-any drug carries a risk of allergic reaction. It is common for patients to experience itching and redness initially at injection sites. This is no cause for concern and will pass in a few hours. If the solution irritates the surrounding tissues, in rare instances blistering can occur. These can be treated and recover but occasionally a tiny scar is left which looks like a freckle.

Other rare risks will be hi-lighted at the consultation.

Prior to treatment instructions.

- Do not use bath oils, lotions or creams on your legs for 24 hours before your injections.
- Dress in loose clothing, jogging trousers or skirt and comfortable shoes to accommodate the support hosiery.
- If you are going to be wearing compression stockings, you may consider bringing a suspender belt to support them.
- If you have already been supplied with support stockings bring them with you on the day of treatment. **don't forget.**

After treatment instructions.

- Take a 10 minute walk immediately after treatment.
- Wear your support stockings day and night for 72 hours; at the end of the 72 hours you may take your stockings off and have a short cool shower or bath. Do not be alarmed that the thread veins look worse, this is normal at this stage.
- For best results you should consider wearing the stockings during the day time (when you are upright) for a further 7 days. Consider wearing the stockings long term to reduce the chance of recurrence.
- Avoid extremes of temperature for 14 days i.e. very hot baths, saunas, sun beds.
- Avoid sun exposure for 4 weeks – pigmentation may take longer to fade.
- Avoid high impact exercise for 2 weeks.
- Avoid waxing of your legs for 4 weeks.
- Elevate your legs as much as possible for the first 2 weeks.
- If you are planning air travel discuss with your practitioner who will advise.

If you have further concerns please contact : _____