

About the Treatment

The sclerotherapy treatment consists of a series of injections, followed by the application of stockings and possibly a compression wrap. The sclerosing solution, Sotradecol and/or Polidocanol, has been developed exclusively for this treatment. We do not use saline injections as they are less effective; associated with more side effects; and are not currently FDA approved for sclerotherapy.

Sclerotherapy is a very safe and effective treatment for spider veins; however, the response following the injections should be understood. Typically the injected areas may be sensitive and swell slightly. The area may look black and blue, or bruised. The small vessels may change color. This discoloration is normal. It will disappear as the healing process takes place. None of this should cause alarm.

The injections are not painful as perceived by almost all of our patients. The needles are very small and often cannot be felt. However, many injections are often required, and one must be prepared to accept the treatment. The solutions will sometimes cause a burning sensation, which lasts several minutes. On larger vessels, some lumps may form along the treated veins. You may have some redness and tenderness along the vein route. This response to the injections is normal. Eventually the vein will disappear, but you may be able to feel it with your hand. Again, this is normal and your body will reabsorb this in time. Many patients go through the treatment with almost none of these reactions at all. As stated, these responses to treatment are not serious, harmful or dangerous and are only temporary in duration.

We hope to ultimately achieve at least 75% or better resolution of all spider veins. If there are a few scattered spider veins, these usually can be eliminated within 3 months or less. If there are a lot of blue spider veins, the treatment may take one year to achieve desired results. You will be advised of our expectations at the time of your initial consultation. It is important to remember that it has often taken years for these veins to develop and they will not disappear overnight. Please be patient and allow time for healing to occur.

It is also important to understand that vein disease is chronic and progressive - that no matter how perfectly patients respond, they will continue to develop new veins throughout their life. If you are happy with the results, you can continue to return for more treatments as often and as long as you like. It is truly impossible to predict how well a person will respond or how many treatments they will require.

Sclerotherapy for spider veins is akin to dental treatments, in that we don't get our teeth cleaned once and expect it to last forever- it's something that we invest in once or twice a year in order to keep our mouths healthy and reduce problems. The benefits of getting rid of your spider veins are a reduction in your symptoms and the satisfaction of showing your legs without feeling embarrassed or self-conscious.

The end point is always up to our patients. We are finished when you are happy with your legs- some people are happy when the majority of their veins are gone, while others want every last vein to disappear. Most people come in for a series of treatments, and then they leave for a period of time. Some people like to come in once a year for a touch up, while most people prefer to return every few years for 1 or 2 treatments. Ultimately, the choice is always yours to make!

We are also pleased to introduce The Vein Gogh System to our practice. This is the latest technology that provides a superior solution for the treatment of fine spider veins, especially vessels that have shown a resistance to sclerotherapy, laser or IPL treatment. Vein Gogh is a fast, easy way to reliably treat these and other cosmetically unacceptable conditions, often with less discomfort compared to older therapies.

Vein Gogh works best on smaller spider veins. It is not designed to treat feeders or larger vessels deep beneath the surface. It is used in conjunction with sclerotherapy to effectively treat the entire spectrum of veins on the legs. These treatments are often given after standard sclerotherapy in order to clear the finest of spider veins that may persist after treatment.

We believe that it is far superior to standard "laser" therapy offered by many clinics to treat spider veins. Lasers and other light-based solutions are expensive, skin-type dependent treatments that have an inherent risk of injury, Vein Gogh uses a hair-thin, insulated probe which can instantly eliminate vessels dependably, repeatedly, on any skin-type and on any part of the body.

On a pain scale of 1-10, with some laser treatments being an 8-9, Vein Gogh is a 2-3. Since the procedure uses a hair-thin, insulated probe, there can be a slight "pinch." Patients report it feels similar to a hair being removed. Depending upon the size of the area, treatments can range from about a few minutes for minor lesions on the nose, to 20-30 minutes for more extensive conditions covering much of the face or

leg. There may be some redness and a "cat-scratch" appearance that may last for several days to a week.

Results will be seen immediately and you will see continuous improvement over several weeks as the treated vessels are reabsorbed. Generally, only one to two treatments are necessary. Veins that have been properly treated will not return. However, new veins may develop over time and require retreatment.

Who should not have Sclerotherapy treatments?

1. Do not have treatments if you are pregnant.
2. You are not a good candidate if your blood thinning medicine must be taken every day, for instance to protect your heart.
3. If your ability to walk is limited, you should not have the treatment.
4. If you are prone to blood clots, or have a known blood clotting disorder, you should not have spider vein treatments.
5. Anyone with severe needle fright will not do well with spider vein treatments. Mild sedatives are available to ease your anxiety.

Who should not have Vein Gogh Treatments?

1. Do not have treatments if you are pregnant.
2. Patients who suffer from Epilepsy.
3. If you have a Pacemaker.
4. If you have used imitation tanning products within the last 7 days.
5. People who have metal allergies.

Before Treatment

1. Eat a light meal before treatment, not just coffee. Strenuous dieting should be moderated during treatment.
2. Bring a pair of shorts to change into for your treatment. Shorts should be of a loose-fitting style. We have shorts for you at the office, should you forget.
3. It is easier to work on well-shaved legs, but do not shave your legs the day of your treatment. The evening prior is best. No lotions, self-tanners, powders or oils should be applied to the skin on the day of treatment.
4. We will fit you with compression stockings or support hose at the time of your treatment, if you do not already have them. Always bring your stockings with you to the office for every appointment.
5. Bring with you or wear loose fitting clothing to fit over the compression hose. You will be asked to put on your compression hose immediately after treatment.
6. Some medications should be avoided for several days prior to treatment. These include Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Plavix, Pletal and Coumadin. Iron supplements and vitamins with iron, as well as fish oil products, also should be stopped at least 1 week prior to treatment, if possible. Please do not resume blood-thinning medicines for at least 2 days and preferably 5 days after treatment, if possible.
7. Arnica cream may help limit the bruising and inflammation. This can sometimes be purchased at a local drug store. We also have it available for purchase at the office. The pills can be started the evening prior to the treatment. A thin layer of gel can be applied to the skin three times daily during the week following any sclerotherapy injections beginning the first night after the treatment. This may also limit some bruising over the treated areas. Most patients will have minimal bruising.



Following Treatment

1. Please avoid high impact sports and activities for 2-3 days after treatment. Treadmill and stretching are fine.
2. Hot tubs, saunas, and leg massages are not recommended during treatment. Bathe using warm, not hot water. Showers are better than tub baths.
3. For sustained outdoor activities, sunscreen is recommended.
4. The stocking(s) should be worn continuously for at least 24 hours. These will be applied before you exit the treatment table. You should then wear the hosiery during the daytime only for an additional 2 weeks. They may be removed while sleeping, bathing, or swimming. This will give the best results with the least side effects.
5. If your legs are uncomfortable after treatment, walking will help. A mild analgesic may also be taken if necessary. Aspirin, Tylenol, Advil, etc, or whatever you usually take for mild aches and pains is appropriate.

As with any medical treatment, you should follow the physician's instructions completely to achieve the best results. If any questions arise, please call the office at anytime, 516-869-VEIN (8346).