



A More Than Skin-Deep Look at Veins



Your life is our life's work.



Mercy Vein Center - 10012 Kennerly
is accredited by the Intersocietal
Accreditation Commission (IAC) in
venous treatment and management.

Introduction

If you suffer from varicose or spider veins, you're not alone. According to the Vascular Disease Foundation, more than 27% of American adults are afflicted with some form of venous disorder, with women four times as likely. For many people, these disorders are the cause of real pain and discomfort. For others, it's mainly a cosmetic problem. This guide from the Mercy Vein Center contains valuable information, no matter what your concern.



What Makes Varicose or Spider Veins?

Unlike arteries, veins carry blood against the flow of gravity. If the valves inside of veins fail, gravity keeps blood from flowing back to the heart. Eventually, the veins become enlarged and bulge to the surface of the skin. Such large veins are called varicose veins; small ones are called spider veins.

With a visual inspection of your legs (where most varicose/spider veins occur) and discussion of your medical history, your doctor can determine the cause and severity of the problem.

Causes of Varicose/Spider Veins

Heredity is the number one cause. But other factors include aging, leg injury or trauma, being overweight and having a job that requires near-constant standing.

Women will notice varicose veins become more prominent with pregnancy and worsen with successive ones.



Symptoms of Varicose Veins

- Leg aches
- Pain
- Heaviness
- Fatigue
- Ankle swelling
- Muscle cramps
- Restlessness
- Itching
- Burning

While varicose veins can lead to complications like blood clots, bleeding, rashes and ulcers, there is good news: the treatment of varicose/spider veins is highly successful.

There are two basic treatment options:

- Conservative: Wearing compression stockings, exercising, losing weight.
- Corrective: Endovenous thermal ablation, chemical ablation, phlebectomy, sclerotherapy and light source/laser treatment.

In many cases, a combination of treatment options works best. And with many insurance plans, varicose vein treatments are a covered expense.

The next section features some basic details on the corrective options available.

Treatment Options

Endovenous Thermal Ablation

A small catheter, inserted into the damaged vein, allows heat to be delivered. This causes the vein to collapse and seal shut. It's done under local anesthesia. A leg wrap or compression stocking is usually worn for a week or two. Patients can walk immediately and are able to return to work the next day.

Endovenous Chemical Ablation

A chemical irritant, called a sclerosant, is injected into the vein and causes the vein to collapse and seal shut. It's done under local anesthesia. A leg wrap or compression stocking is usually worn for a week or two. Patients can walk immediately and are able to return to work the next day.

Ambulatory Phlebectomy

Small incisions are made in the skin next to the vein. The vein is then removed through these cuts. It's performed under local anesthesia. A leg wrap or compression stocking is usually worn for a short period. Normal activities can be resumed after several days.

Sclerotherapy

Similar to endovenous chemical ablation, but used to treat varicose and spider veins. A chemical irritant is injected into the vein causing it to collapse and seal shut. Compression stockings are worn for several days, but walking is immediate.

Light Source/Laser treatment

Many varieties are available and are used mostly to treat spider veins. This procedure involves a light beam that creates heat inside a vein, causing it to get sealed off and reabsorbed by the body. No anesthesia. A compression stocking has to be worn for a few days, but normal activities can be resumed immediately.



What Results Can You Expect?

Technological advancements in both the evaluation and treatment of varicose or spider veins means treating them is safer and more effective than ever.

We do want to remind you that heredity is the most important cause of varicose or spider veins. So any successful treatment does not eliminate the chance you may have other vein failures in the future.

Treatment Complications

The risks and complications related to varicose vein treatment are rare, but no procedure is risk free. Serious complications, like a life-threatening allergy and/or blood clots, are possible with any treatment of large varicose veins. Infections are always possible with any procedure and skin burns could result from thermal procedures. And any treatment for varicose or spider veins could result in temporary discomfort, bruising, swelling, discoloration, or reddish blushing of the skin. Temporary numbness and tingling of the treated area is possible. Rarely, it can be permanent.

As always, we encourage you to discuss any procedure with your treatment provider so that you're as prepared, informed and relaxed as possible.

Choosing the Right Facility Makes All the Difference

Mercy Vein Center - 10012 Kennerly was the first facility serving patients from Missouri or Illinois to be accredited by the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) in venous treatment and management. It's also the only facility in the St. Louis region to receive this level of accreditation.

Mercy Vein Center - 10012 Kennerly is part of Mercy, ranked as one of the top five large health systems in the nation by Watson for the last three years. All winners outperformed their peers in a number of ways, including shorter hospital stays, fewer complications, and better patient results.

Schedule a Free Vein Screening Today

If you are a candidate for varicose vein treatment, a screening can help determine the next steps. Schedule yours by [clicking here](#).

Services available at these locations:

Mercy Vein Center

10012 Kennerly Road, Suite 203A

St. Louis | 63128

314.880.6622

Mercy Clinic Heart and Vascular

1001 S. Kirkwood Rd., Suite 310

Kirkwood | 63122

314.880.6622

