

Micro-Phlebectomy for varicose veins

You have been offered phlebectomy, which is surgical removal of bulging varicose veins through tiny skin incisions. This minimally invasive procedure is performed in the office with local anesthesia. Phlebectomy is also known as micro phlebectomy (because the incisions are tiny) or ambulatory phlebectomy.

What are the options for treating bulging varicose veins at the skin surface?

There are two main techniques to treat varicose veins:

- 1.) Phlebectomy: surgical removal of the veins
- 2.) Foam sclerotherapy: injection of a medicated foam to close the veins

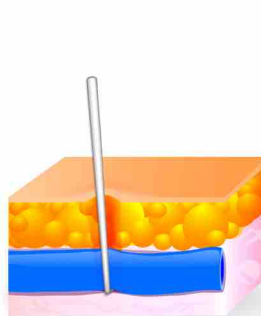
Sclerotherapy is the least invasive, but patients with large and/or numerous bulging veins may require several sclerotherapy appointments over two or more months. This is because we can only administer a small amount of foam medication per day and larger veins may require two or more injections to close. Larger veins can also become firm and tender after sclerotherapy and/or deposit brownish blood pigments in the skin as the veins are healing.

Why was I offered phlebectomy?

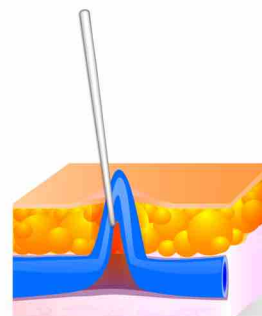
Patients with bulging varicose veins may prefer to start with micro-phlebectomy removal of the largest veins, then sclerotherapy treatment for the remaining veins. This reduces the number of appointments and accelerates recovery.

How does the procedure work?

The skin is numbed with lidocaine, then a tiny puncture is made in the skin (about $\frac{1}{2}$ the size of a grain of rice). We then infuse additional numbing medication around the veins. A small hook is used to bring the vein to the skin surface, then the vein is removed.



A hook is inserted into a tiny incision



A section of the vein is hooked



The vein is removed

What should I expect on the day of treatment?

The procedure is performed with local anesthesia, but many patients elect to use a mild oral sedative (Valium), which is taken after checking in and completing all paperwork. We will mark your bulging veins with a marker.

The leg will then be prepped for the sterile procedure. The skin overlying the veins will be numbed with lidocaine, then the doctor will make tiny incisions over the bulging veins. A small hook will be used to bring the veins to the surface. More numbing medication will be infused around the veins. You will feel pressure as the veins are removed but not pain. Usually about 10-12 veins are removed. Once the procedure is done, we will apply skin glue to the tiny puncture sites, then sterile bandages. We will help you into your compression stocking and place an ACE wrap around the treated area. You will walk for 30 minutes prior to getting in your car. The ACE wrap can be removed that night or the next day. You will wear the compression stocking for 72 hours continuously.

What should I do after treatment?

You should walk 30 minutes twice daily after treatment. This will alleviate discomfort and avoid pooling of blood in the legs. It is normal to have aching in the areas where veins were removed. This responds well to walking, ice packs, and anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) and naproxen (Aleve®).

What should I avoid after treatment?

Do not take a shower for 48-72 hours after the procedure to allow your puncture sites to heal. For at least two weeks after treatment, you should avoid airline travel, strenuous exercise (anything more than a brisk walk), heavy lifting, and leg massages for two weeks. You should avoid saunas, hot tubs, and hot baths until at least your 1-month follow-up appointment. All of these dilate the superficial veins and interfere with their healing.

What are the possible adverse effects?

- There is a low risk of infection at the vein removal sites, which we minimize by using sterile technique and prophylactic antibiotics. You will start the antibiotic on the morning of your procedure and continue it for 24 hours after the procedure.
- **You will have bruising where the veins were removed**, which fades over about two weeks.
- As with any vein treatment, there are also very small risks of deep vein clots and nerve injury.

Videos of the treatment, as well as after care instructions can be found on our website our [YouTube channel](#).

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