



## Endovenous Laser Ablation for Saphenous Vein Reflux

You have been offered an endovenous laser ablation (EVLA) procedure for backwards flow (or “reflux”) in your saphenous vein(s). Laser is also referred to as endovenous laser ablation therapy (EVLT). The great and small saphenous veins are the two main superficial veins of the leg. They run along the inner leg and the back of the leg, respectively.

This minimally invasive procedure can be performed in the office in less than an hour and patients return to their usual level of activity the same day.

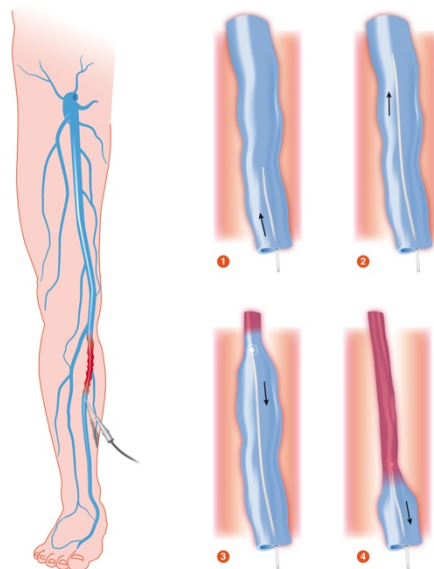


### How does the treatment work?

The skin is numbed with lidocaine, then a tiny wire and the laser catheter are inserted into the vein. The catheter delivers laser energy to the vein wall, causing it to seal shut. The remaining healthy veins continue to bring blood back to the heart.

### 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. You will change into a gown and leave underwear on. Depending on the vein to be treated, you will lay on your back or on your belly. We do our best to make special accommodations (for example, if you cannot lie flat or cannot bend a knee very well) with body positioning and using pillows. We will do our best to make you comfortable. Then, we will give you the option of watching a movie on Netflix or listen to music. Once you are comfortable, your leg (s) will be prepped with cleansing solution for the sterile procedure. The doctor will perform an ultrasound to map the vein (s) to be treated. Then, a



numbing agent (lidocaine) will be injected into the skin. In the numb area of the skin, a tiny puncture is made to pass the laser catheter under ultrasound guidance. Your doctor will then use a needle to administer a combination of cool saline and local anesthetic around the vein. This solution numbs the vein and insulates it from the surrounding tissue. Laser energy will then be used to painlessly treat the vein. Once your vein has been treated, we will help you into your compression stocking, which you will wear for 72 hours continuously. You will walk for 30 minutes prior to getting in your car.

### **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 treated veins. 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?**

For at least two weeks after treatment, you should avoid airline travel, strenuous exercise (anything more than a brisk walk), heavy lifting, saunas or hot tubs, and leg massages. All of these dilate the superficial veins and interfere with their healing.

### **What are the possible adverse effects?**

Expect some bruising over the injection sites, which fades over about two weeks. The skin overlying larger varicose veins may also develop some temporary inflammation and/or brownish “hyperpigmentation” as the blood products within those veins are absorbed by the body. Less common complications include blood clots within the deep veins or a temporary area of skin numbness over a tiny branch of a skin nerve that travels close to a vein.

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