

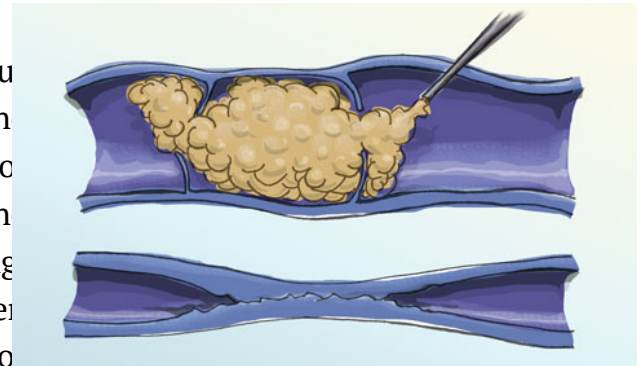


## Ultrasound-Guided Foam Sclerotherapy

Ultrasound-guided foam sclerotherapy works well for treating surface varicose veins and veins that are not visible to the naked eye. The foam medication can be seen on ultrasound, which allows us to administer it precisely and direct it towards nearby varicose veins. Foam sclerotherapy can be safely used for veins that travel close to the skin or nerves. It also travels easily through veins with many twists and turns.

### What is polidocanol (Asclera®)?

A variety of sclerosant medications can be used for veins, but we prefer polidocanol (brand name Asclera®) because it is the most comfortable for the patient and has the lowest risk of side effects. It is a detergent-type medication that injures the inner lining of the veins. This causes the vein to stop flowing and then eventually close down completely. Polidocanol has been well-studied and has been approved by the FDA since 2010 for



the treatment of varicose veins and has been used in Europe for decades. Polidocanol is turned into a foam to treat larger veins. This is an off-label use of the sclerosant but very effective and well tolerated. La Jolla Vein Care providers have extensive experience with foam sclerotherapy.

### How many treatments will I need?

The number and frequency of treatments depends on a patient's anatomy, how well the veins respond to each treatment, and the patient's treatment goals. The national average is 2 to 5 treatment sessions to achieve 80% improvement. Some larger or resistant veins require two or more treatments to respond completely.

### What should I expect on my treatment days?

You will sign your consent form then change into shorts provided by the office. We will clean your skin with alcohol, then use ultrasound to localize the veins. The foam medication will then be injected into your veins with a fine needle. You will elevate your legs on a wedge pillow for approximately 15 minutes. After your treatment, we will help you into your compression stockings, then you will walk

for 30 minutes prior to getting in your car. It is normal for your legs to be achy and tender to the touch after treatment.

#### **What should I do after treatment?**

- You will wear thigh-high compression stockings continuously for 3 days after each treatment, then another 7 days during the day. You may shower with the stockings on or take a quick cool shower with them off.
- You should walk 30 minutes twice daily after treatment and move your legs frequently throughout the day with short walks and/or calf exercises. This will 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 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.
- You should also avoid airline travel for two weeks after treatment.

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

- You will likely have some bruising over the injection sites, then the treated veins may become firm and blue.
- The skin overlying larger varicose veins may also develop brownish “hyperpigmentation” as the blood products within those veins are absorbed by the body; in some patients it can take up to a year to fade.
- An uncommon complication is a blood clot within a deep vein. This risk is minimized by using ultrasound guidance and performing calf exercises throughout the procedure.

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