**SCLERO THERAPY—YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

What are spider veins?
Spider veins are tiny superficial blood vessels usually appearing as clusters of red, purple, or blue veins close to the skin surface. They are small, threadlike and “spidery” in appearance, sometimes having a starburst or tree-like pattern. Most commonly, they occur on the leg around thighs, calves, or ankles.

How are spider veins treated?
Sclerotherapy is the “gold standard” in the treatment of unwanted spider veins. This procedure continues to be the most successful treatment option available for spider veins.

What is sclerotherapy?
Sclerotherapy is a simple procedure performed in-clinic that requires no anesthesia. A sclerosant (irritating liquid) is injected into a vein using a small needle, causing the blood in the vein to displace. The vein collapses, closes down, and then disappears over time.

Does sclerotherapy work for everyone?
The majority of people who have sclerotherapy will have satisfying results. In very rare cases, conditions may become worse after treatment.

Will I see immediate results?
After several treatments most patients can expect 50-90 percent improvement. However, fading is gradual, usually over several months, with complete disappearance achieved in most cases.

Will treated veins recur?
After treatments, spider veins may appear again in some patients. Approximately 10 percent of veins treated persist after multiple treatments. Additional treatments may be required; some veins do not respond to sclerotherapy, and new spider veins can develop near the site of previous injection.

How many treatments are required?
The number of treatments will vary for each patient, depending on the size and number of veins involved. Several veins can be injected at each session. One to six treatments may be needed, but the average is three to four. Treatment plans are patient specific and are agreed upon by you and your vein specialist.
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Is sclerotherapy painful?

The procedure is usually associated with minimal discomfort. A burning or stinging sensation at the time of injection may be felt. This discomfort usually resolves within minutes. Most are able to return to their normal routine right after their treatment session.

Are there any side effects with sclerotherapy?

It is important that you discuss your concerns and expectations for the procedure with the clinician. Even with highly trained clinicians providing your care, occasional side effects do occur. They can include the following:

- Swelling at the injection site is common in some patients. Also, swelling of the ankles, feet, or muscle can occur. These symptoms usually resolve within 30 minutes after injection.
- Bruising can develop around injected areas if the veins are unusually weak and will disappear within a month's time.
- Bleeding at the injection site can occur and resolves with direct pressure. Hematomas are accumulations of blood underneath the skin that feel like lumps; they usually need to be drained if they occur.
- Matting (the appearance of fine red veins)
- Hyperpigmentation (brown lines or spots)
- Ulcers
- Allergic reactions

There are few absolute contraindications to sclerotherapy, but some medical conditions do warrant either postponing or proceeding with caution. These include, but are not limited to, pregnancy/nursing, prolonged bleeding diseases, connective tissue diseases, arterial diseases, diabetes, immune-compromised states, heart/kidney/liver disease, history of keloid formations, allergies, and previous adverse reactions to sclerotherapy. If you have any of these conditions, or for a complete list of contraindications, please contact the vein nurse.

Are “medical” stockings needed after treatment?

Compression therapy is an important part of treatment for vein disease. In order to achieve and maintain satisfying results, you must wear compression stockings. A prescription will be provided before your session.

Will insurance pay for sclerotherapy?

The cost for sclerotherapy is not covered by most insurance companies and is not billed to insurance by UAB. Vein clinic fee schedules will be made available prior to treatment.

Let the professional staff at UAB Vein Clinic schedule your comprehensive medical evaluation. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (205) 996-8346, or visit our Web site at uabhealth.org/vein.