

Spider Veins Overview

What are Spider Veins?

Spider Veins are small red, blue or purple veins that commonly appear on the surface of the thighs, calves and ankles. It's estimated that at least one third of the adult female population is troubled with this common problem. People often seek treatment for spider veins because of cosmetic concern. However, it is also common for spider veins to cause symptoms, such as aching, burning, heaviness, itching and night cramps.

A common form of treatment for spider veins is Sclerotherapy. This is an in-office procedure where veins are injected with a solution, using small needles, which causes them to collapse and fade from view. The procedure typically improves not only the cosmetic appearance but associated symptoms as well. Generally a few sessions are required to obtain maximum benefit.

Spider veins may be isolated or associated with "feeder" veins. They can also be associated with larger underlying varicose veins.

Treatments

Sclerotherapy, or injection therapy, is a non-surgical procedure in which a solution is injected into the problematic varicose or spider veins in order to cause its disappearance. Sclerotherapy is done in the office using small needles. A variety of solutions are used to do sclerotherapy. At The Richmond Vein Center, we do not use saline as it is too painful and may cause damage to the skin. The dosage is usually adjusted based on the size of the veins. Most patients find the treatment to have little or no pain. No surgical incisions are made and anesthesia is not necessary. When a problem vein is closed off via sclerotherapy, the blood will re-route through the normal veins and flow much more efficiently.

Sclerotherapy works by irritating the lining of the vein such that the vein seals shut. Treatment takes about 20-30 minutes and can be used to treat spider veins and varicose veins. Patients usually wear a compression stocking for a short period after treatment. Most people need a few treatments to obtain the best results. Treatments are generally done in monthly intervals.

