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Dermatology

SCLEROTHERAPY: TELANGIECTASIA LEG VEINS

PRE AND POST TREATMENT

Sclerotherapy of unwanted or painful leg veins involves the injection of a salt or sclerosing solution into the veins using a tiny needle. Most patients require 2-3 treatments in any one area to see 80% improvement. It will not be possible to remove all the vessels in an area. Tenderness and discomfort during the injections are tolerable by most patients. Redness and irritation of injected veins are seen in almost all patients immediately after injection because it is in this manner that the blood vessels are destroyed. Occasionally, bruising is also observed in this manner that the blood vessels are destroyed. Brown spots may be temporarily present where veins have been injected.

Do not be in a hurry for veins to disappear after treatment. It usually takes 2-3 weeks to notice onset of fading and this can be a slow process.

Insurance companies consider treatment of small leg veins a cosmetic procedure. They will not reimburse for sclerotherapy. Therefore full payment is requested on the day of treatment. I will discuss the price at the initial consultation.

HINTS BEFORE HAVING SCLEROTHERAPY

1. Please eat before your treatment. This will avoid lightheadedness which occasionally will occur if you have not eaten breakfast or lunch.
2. Do not shave your legs or use moisturizers for 48 hours before treatment. Shaven or greasy legs are more difficult to inject.
3. Bring shorts on the day of your visit; you will be much more comfortable during the treatment.

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AFTER SCLEROTHERAPY

1. Wear compression bandage until the following morning unless instructed otherwise.
2. You may speed treatment by walking or exercising regularly and by wearing support hose. **DO NOT** perform vigorous exercise such as jogging or aerobics for 24-36 hours after a treatment session.
3. Call your doctor's office if:
 - a) severe swelling develops
 - b) severe discomfort or tenderness develops, or
 - c) if you notice a sore forming at the site of injection.
4. Do not sunbathe or use the tanning booth for at least 6 weeks after treatment or you may have an increased chance of having brown spots in the area of your sclerotherapy.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Immediately after treatment, for the first 24 hours:

- ❖ Avoid prolonged standing or sitting
- ❖ Elevate legs while seated as much as possible

For 24 to 48 hours:

- ❖ Avoid strenuous activity: heavy lifting, running, vigorous aerobics, jumping rope
- ❖ Avoid hot baths or hot tubs or spas.
- ❖ Avoid wearing tight or constricting clothing.
- ❖ The ideal types of activities include walking, bike riding, and low-impact aerobics.

Specific Treatment Site Care:

- ❖ Remove the dressings after 24 hours.
- ❖ You are encouraged to wear support panty hose during waking hours for the next week to ensure the best results.
- ❖ You can expect maximal fading after 2 to 3 weeks, but some blood vessels may require up to 3 months improving.
- ❖ You may notice some dark lines or streaks at the treatment site over the blood vessels. This is only temporary and should fade over several months.
- ❖ If you notice one of the following: scabs, blisters, ulcers, swelling, or excessive tenderness at any injection site, please call and inform us.

CONSENT FOR TREATMENT OF LEG VEINS

A small needle is threaded into the blood vessel and a small amount of a sclerosing agent is gently injected. This may sting for 20-30 seconds or cause a slight cramp. The injection “flushes” out the red blood cells temporarily, leading to an inflammatory reaction. This reaction causes “sclerosis”, or the formation of fibrous tissues within the vessel, leading to the gradual disappearance of the vessel. This fading can take from a few weeks to a few months. Most areas will require between three to five treatments to fade.

Some of the possible risks include:

1. The appearance of the veins may not improve. However, over 90% of patients see improvement.
2. Brown spots may appear that look like bruises or follow the path of the vein. These brown areas take several weeks to months to go away. It is rare for any discoloration to be permanent.
3. Blistering infection, ulceration, and scarring may develop if someone is exceptionally sensitive to the tiny amount of solution that may leak out during the injection. This occurs in less than 1% of patients. An allergic reaction to some of the solutions is also a rare possibility.
4. Tenderness, bruising, or firmness (especially along the larger vessels) in the treated area may last for varying periods of time. This can be minimized by the use of support hose after the treatment.
5. Some people (less than 10%) may develop a “matt”, or pink blush of skin, which comes from a temporary enlargement of the tiny capillaries. This is rarely permanent and can be treated.
6. Sometimes blood may accumulate in the larger veins treated by sclerotherapy. These accumulations may be treated by the physician to decrease any discomfort. Strict use of support hose minimizes this possibility.
7. Rarely, this accumulation of blood may form a clot. Although this is usually trapped in the treated vein, an extremely rare possibility is the extension of this clot into a deeper vessel causing phlebitis. The risk of this occurring is much less than 1%.
8. People with significant circulatory problems or diabetes should not undergo this procedure.