

## Sclerotherapy

- Sclerotherapy is a medical procedure used to shrink and collapse abnormal veins by injecting a chemical agent into the lumen of the vein with the purpose of destroying the vein so blood no longer flows through it.
- Sclerotherapy is usually used by vein specialists at Physician's Vein Clinics following Endovenous Laser Ablation (EVLA) procedures to treat and destroy residual collateral varicose veins. This is part of the 'Continuum of Therapy Approach' adopted by Physician's Vein Clinics which ensures that EVLA-treated vein segments will not experience a treatment failure by vein recanalization. Ultrasound guidance is used when medically necessary to direct a small needle into the lumen of each targeted vein to ensure accurate sclerosant placement, a procedure called ultrasound-guided sclerotherapy.
- Mild discomfort may occur following a sclerotherapy session. This is usually described as a temporary burning or cramping sensation.
- A sclerotherapy procedure usually takes about 30 minutes. Following your treatment session, you will need to walk in the clinic or on a treadmill for 20 minutes.
- Up to 70 percent of treated veins can be eliminated with each sclerotherapy injection session. Several sclerotherapy sessions are usually required to chemically ablate the majority of veins treated using this technique.
- Veins responsive to sclerotherapy usually do not reappear. However, smaller visible surface veins may appear after sclerotherapy sessions in response to redirected blood flow. If desired, these tiny surface veins may be treated using cosmetic techniques with transdermal laser or light treatments.
- Your treating vein specialist will decide the treatment interval for your sclerotherapy sessions, as well as the duration of time you will need to wear compression stockings following your sclerotherapy session. In general, sclerotherapy sessions are scheduled every 1-2 months following your initial EVLA procedure(s).
- It is important to remember that it took years to create your varicose vein problem, and it may take weeks to months for us at Physicians Vein Clinics.
- Wearing your compression stockings as instructed by your vein specialist at Physicians Vein Clinics will optimize the effectiveness and overall clinical outcome of your vein treatment sessions.

## Pre-Treatment Instructions:

- Remember to **bring your compression stockings with you for each appointment at Physician's Vein Clinics.**
- Bring comfortable shoes for walking on a treadmill following your sclerotherapy session.
- Avoid using lotion on your legs for 2 days before and 2 days after your sclerotherapy session to avoid excessive skin hydration or increased risk of infection.
- **Avoid taking Aspirin and NSAIDS (such as Advil, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve, Naproxen) for one week prior to your sclerotherapy session as these medications increase the tendency to bruise and bleed.**
- Report any medication allergies or changes in your medical condition prior to each sclerotherapy session.
- **Air travel** should be avoided for 3 days following a sclerotherapy session.

## **Post-Treatment and Compression Stocking Instructions:**

- After your sclerotherapy session, staff at Physician's Vein Clinics will put a compression stocking onto your leg(s). After walking for 20 minutes you will then be able to drive yourself home.
- You will be instructed to wear compression stockings continuously for 3 days. Thereafter, you will wear your stockings for the number of days specified by your vein specialist during waking hours and whenever you are in an upright posture.
- Following a sclerotherapy session, you may resume your regular activities in one week, with the exception of running, jumping, swimming, weight lifting and other strenuous activities that involve your core muscle group (torso area).
- Some patients may experience foot discomfort while sleeping in the compression stockings. If this occurs, you will be instructed to remove your stocking(s) and elevate your legs instead. The best method to elevate your legs is to raise the foot of your bed by two to three inches.
- **Never** fold the stocking(s) back onto themselves while you are wearing them. **Never cut the stocking(s).**
- Please remember to always handle your stockings with gloved hands. Either rubber gloves or disposable glove varieties can be used. The compression stockings can become compromised by a run, hole, tear or snag. **Nursing staff may recommend replacement of your stockings depending upon their condition.**
- Please inform our nursing staff should you experience difficulties with your compression stockings. We offer a water soluble skin adhesive (stocking glue) to keeping the stockings secured to your upper thigh area.
- **Do not take hot baths or sit in a whirlpool or sauna** for at least two weeks following a sclerotherapy session. Heating of the skin results in vein dilation which may worsen the underlying vein condition. Avoid immersion in pools and lakes to reduce the risk of acquiring a skin infection while your sclerotherapy related needle pokes heal.
- You may shower after sclerotherapy sessions. The water temperature should be luke warm or tepid to reduce heat-induced vasodilation of the surface leg veins. It is recommended that during the period you are instructed to wear your stockings that you also shower in them as well. Taking baths should be avoided while you are receiving vein care.
- Depending upon your schedule it may be easier to shower before bedtime; taking the stocking(s) off immediately after lying down and hanging the wet stocking over an object to dry by the next morning. A fan directed at the hanging stockings can expedite their drying.
- You are **encouraged to walk 30-60 minutes a day** and to avoid excessive standing while motionless. Options to walking include cycling, elliptical riders and treadmills. You may flex and point your toes 10 times or so every 5 minutes while sitting to circulate blood through your legs as this maneuver exercises your calf muscle and calf venous pump.
- Certain tissue changes may be experienced after sclerotherapy. Injected veins may become lumpy and hard for several months. These changes usually soften and resolve with time. Bruising and swelling can occur around sclerotherapy injection sites. These changes usually last for a few days to weeks before resolving.
- **If you experience signs or symptoms** which are worrisome to you, you should **contact** your vein specialist at Physicians Vein Clinics. Side effects which are worrisome include fever & chills, formation of skin ulcers at injection sites, worsening pain localized to a varicose vein segment, and progressive swelling or edema. It is normal and expected that treated vein segments will be firm, ropelike, tender to the touch, and mildly swollen.
- **Physician's Vein Clinics offers a 24-Hour Answering Service for all of our patients.** If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Physician's Vein Clinics speak with your vein specialist or to the nursing staff:  
PVC Answering Service Ph#: (605) 376-7178.