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Sclerotherapy Patient Information

Spider veins are small, dilated blood vessels located close to the surface of the skin that have a red or bluish color. Although they can appear anywhere on the body, spider veins typically occur on the legs and face. Sclerotherapy involves the injection of a special solution into the unwanted veins. The solution irritates the lining of the vessel, causing it to swell and stick together, which causes the blood to thicken. Over a period of weeks, the vessel turns into scar tissue that is absorbed, eventually becoming barely noticeable or invisible.

What sclerosing solution do we use?

Patients are treated with a Glycerin solution. Unlike other practices that use a Hypertonic Saline agent, we prefer Glycerin solution due to its many benefits. Glycerin is less painful and has demonstrated a significant decrease in bruising, swelling and post procedural pigmentation.

Glycerin 72 % mixed 2:1 with 1% lidocaine with epinephrine.

How does it work?

The solution works by damaging the cells that line the blood vessels. The damaged vessels fade slowly over the next 2-4 weeks as the body's immune system reacts to and removes the damaged areas. We can usually achieve 70-90% fading with an average of 2-4, 30 minute treatments.

What are the possible side effects?

Most of the patients have little to no problems and notice a slow disappearance of the treated vessels over a 2-4 week period.

1. Slight blistering may occur at the injection site if small amounts of solution leak into the surrounding skin. This usually heals without a problem, but a slight and temporary freckle-like pigmentation may occur. Most, if not all of this pigmentation will disappear over the next several months without treatment.
2. Bruising at the site of the injection, usually short-lived and resolves within days to a couple of weeks following treatment.
3. Tiny blood clots may appear as blue/green or black dots in the treated vessels and resolve within 6-8 weeks after treatment without therapy. They are rarely tender and can be removed by using a small needle and a Q-tip. These clots will not cause any problems.
4. Swelling is noted on occasion, particularly in those patients who have jobs that require prolonged standing. The swelling is never dangerous, but occasionally requires treatment with ace wraps and leg elevation.



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5. Superficial Thrombophlebitis is very rare. Less than 1 case per thousand treatments is reported. This condition requires ace wraps, leg elevation, warm soaks and anti-inflammatory medications.
6. Neovascular Flushing is seen as the appearance of very tiny, net-like mats of new vessels. It may occur in 30% of patients treated. It will either resolve over time or with additional treatments.
7. Infection is very rare. Everything used is sterile and disposable. The skin is cleansed with alcohol prior to the injections and gloves are worn by your doctor.
8. Scarring is very rare if the procedure is done by experienced personnel. Your doctor has been performing this procedure on a routine basis for many years now and has treated over hundreds of patients without any significant problems.

How soon will the vessels disappear?

Each vessel may require 2-4 injection sessions to obtain optimal fading. However, every patient is different and some may require more sessions. They usually disappear over a period of 2 weeks to 3 months.

How often do I have to come for treatments?

Treatments are done at 3-4 week intervals.

Are there any physical restrictions following therapy?

You will wear some cotton balls and tape on the treated sites for 3-5 hours following therapy. Walking is encouraged immediately following treatment. Low impact aerobics, swimming, and bicycle riding are allowed in the first 48 hours. There should be no strenuous exercise or heavy lifting during this period. Showers are preferred over baths and Jacuzzis should be avoided. After the first 48 hours, there are no restrictions on bathing or regular daily activities.

Is treatment painful?

Most patients tolerate the treatment well and only report minimal discomfort. There is little or no pain reported in the postoperative period.

Bring a pair of shorts, leotard or bikini bottom to wear during treatment. Do not shave your legs or use a moisturizer on the day of treatment.