

SCLEROTHERAPY POST-CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Spider veins are small blood vessels located in the outer layer of skin. The color is either red or blue based upon the capillary anatomy. These vessels are often unsightly in appearance, and sometimes cause discomfort in the skin.

Spider veins are caused primarily by genetics and may be associated with an underlying vein insufficiency. If present, underlying problems are best treated first to reduce the chance that more spider veins will return in the future.

How does Sclerotherapy spider vein treatment work?

Sclerotherapy requires the injection of a solution into the abnormal veins. The solution damages the inside lining of the vein, causing the vein initially to clot, and then to scar closed. Once adequately scarred, or sclerosed, the vein will not re-open and will not re-occur.

The three sclerosing solutions most often used at DLA are foamed Sotradecol, glycerin/lidocaine, and polidocanol. All are excellent solutions which give good results and minimum side effects.

The majority of our patients report that the injections are not as painful as perceived. The needle is very small 30 gauge, and often cannot be felt as it penetrates the small veins. The solutions can cause a burning/ stinging sensation which can last several minutes.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER TREATMENT:

1. **Wear compression hose** or compression wraps **continuously until bedtime**. These will be applied before you exit the treatment table. Please bring with you the compression stockings if you have already purchased them. If you need to purchase the stockings, we have high-quality thigh high hosiery which you can purchase from the office. You should then wear the hose **daytime only** for an **additional 7 to 10 days**. This will give you the best results and decrease side effects.
2. Immediately after treatment, with your compression wraps or hose on your legs, please walk around for 10-15 minutes. This helps distribute the solutions and dilute any solution in the deep veins. You may drive and otherwise participate in all normal activities, with your compression hose on your legs.
3. Avoid high impact sports and activities for 2 days after treatment. You may be asked to wait a longer interval, depending upon the size of the veins treated.
4. *Be patient as your treatment results develop over time.* It may take more time than you expect to see desired results. Veins may have a darker appearance as they dissolve, and this appearance can last several weeks to months.

What are the expected results?

Our goal is to resolve at least 50% of all spider veins with each treatment. This may require several treatments over a period of a year or more. If the area has few scattered spider veins, they usually can be eliminated within 6 months or less with additional treatments. If there are a lot of blue or red spider veins, the treatment may take one year or longer to achieve desired results.

You will be advised of our expectations at the time of your consultation.

Are complications possible?

As with any medical treatment, complications can and do occasionally occur. At DLA, we use the best treatment options available today which cause the least adverse side effects.

- *Pigmentation* – Blood pigment will often stain the skin after spider vein treatments. The vein will be eliminated, but a brown discoloration will be present where the vein once was visible. These pigments usually go away almost entirely within one year. Iron medication is thought to contribute to an increased incidence of pigment formation. Protection from sun exposure will help minimize lasting effects.
- *Bruising* – Common after spider vein treatments. Resolves almost entirely within 6 to 8 weeks.
- *Skin numbness* - Nearby skin nerves are sometimes stunned by the treatments. This most often resolves within a few months.
- *Itching and redness* – Occasionally develops at treatment sites. This is not serious and can be treated with Benadryl cream and antihistamines if the itching is prolonged.
- *Ankle and leg swelling* – Common after injection treatments, especially if ankle and foot veins are treated. This will disappear usually within a few days to months. Compression hose should be worn in the interim.
- *Blood clots* – This is normal and is the desired result of treatment. The veins will feel lumpy or knot-like and are often associated with tenderness and redness of the skin. This will typically go away within 2-4 months or longer and is treated with ibuprofen or other anti-inflammatory medication. If you have concerns, please call our office.
- *Deep vein blood clots* – Rarely occur after spider vein treatments. Compression hose and walking for 10-15 minutes after your treatment will help minimize this possibility.
- *Skin ulceration* – Although rare, sometimes the solution will damage the skin excessively and cause a small ulcer. The ulcer will take 6 to 8 weeks to heal and may require minor skin wound care such as ointments and light dressings.
- *Veins resistant to treatment, and new veins developing* – Some veins are more difficult to treat and will not disappear, and occasionally new veins will develop at treatment sites. Both problems are rare and can be treated successfully by additional injections and changing solutions and compression methods.

TREATMENT COST

Spider vein treatments are considered cosmetic and are NOT covered by insurance. Each spider vein treatment is \$500. A treatment includes sclerotherapy (injection) of spider veins on both legs, front and back, including the ankles and feet.

The number of treatments required is difficult to estimate. Our staff will provide for you our best judgment regarding the number of treatments you will need. Usually, the interval between treatments is two to three months. It is common to need 4-6 treatments to eradicate spider veins completely.

Annual maintenance treatments are strongly recommended to touch up any new veins that may develop. Treated veins will be permanently reduced.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Except for true emergencies, we respectfully request you notify us 72 hours prior to an appointment cancellation. A \$50 cancellation/no show fee will be applied to individuals who cancel within the 72-hour window.

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