

A Patient's Guide to Gentle Treatment for Laser Vein Therapy.



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varicose veins

What are **varicose veins**?

Your circulatory system is a complex network of arteries and veins which deliver oxygen and nutrients to your entire body. Arteries carry blood from your heart to the rest of your body. Veins carry blood back to your heart to be replenished with oxygen. In your legs, veins contain valves that keep blood pumping up to your heart, and prevent blood from flowing back down to your feet. If these valves become weak, blood can leak back into the veins and collect there, creating a condition called venous insufficiency. As the blood pools in a vein, that vein enlarges, becoming varicose.

Varicose veins often appear twisted and bulging. Because these veins are swollen, they raise above the surface of the skin. They may be flesh colored, or take on a dark purple or blue color. Varicose veins commonly form on the back of the calves or on the inside of the legs. Up to 40% of women, and 20% of men suffer from the symptoms of varicose veins.

1 out of 2 people over the age of 50 have varicose veins.

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What are the symptoms of **varicose veins**?

Varicose veins are the result of a problem within the vein itself, and have a number of symptoms, including:

- ***Itching or irritated rash on the legs or near the ankles***
- ***Tenderness around the area of the varicose vein***
- ***In severe cases, darkening of the skin can occur***
- ***Numbness in the legs***
- ***Swelling in the legs***
- ***Easily tired legs***
- ***Leg heaviness***
- ***Aching pain***

If you exhibit any of these symptoms, you should talk to your physician about receiving treatment.



Why treat **varicose veins**?

In addition to being painful and embarrassing, if left without treatment, varicose veins can enlarge and worsen, becoming a health risk. Some health problems that can arise from severe varicose veins include:

- ***Ongoing irritation, swelling and painful rashes of the legs***
- ***Sores or ulcers on the skin tissue around varicose veins***
- ***Severe venous insufficiency that may slow the return of blood to the heart***
- ***Risk of clotting, phlebitis, infection and resulting danger to lungs and heart***

Taking steps to treat and prevent varicose veins can help keep your legs and your whole body healthy.

What makes **ELVeS[®]** the best option?

There are a number of treatments for varicose veins. The traditional form of treatment is surgical ligation and stripping. At least two incisions are made, where the surgeon ties off and pulls out the faulty vein. The surgery can be expensive, requiring general anesthesia and hospitalization. In addition, the surgery can leave scarring and often requires a lengthy recovery period.

A second form of treatment, called sclerotherapy involves injecting a solution into the veins. This solution causes the vein walls to swell, stick together and seal shut. The flow of blood stops, and the vein turns to scar tissue. This treatment can be administered in the doctor's office and does not require anesthesia. While less invasive, sclerotherapy is less effective on larger veins, and has a higher recurrence rate.

A third form of treatment, endovenous laser treatment, is relatively new and has replaced stripping in most severe varicose vein cases. The ELVeS® procedure is a preferred form of endovenous laser treatment that combines the effectiveness of surgery with the minimally-invasive, in-office ease of sclerotherapy. ELVeS® is a safe, in-office procedure that uses fewer injections, less local anesthesia and has a quick recovery time.

How does ELVeS® work?

During the ELVeS® procedure, your physician will map the varicose vein using ultrasound. A thin laser fiber will be inserted into the vein. Laser light will be emitted through the fiber, and the laser energy will close the vein.

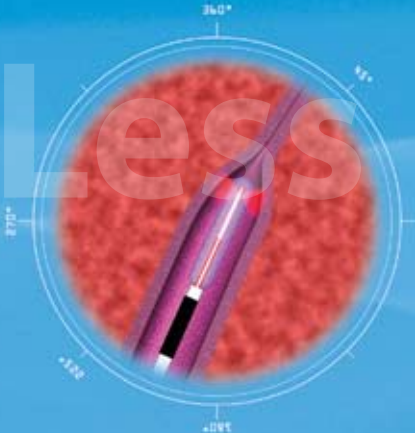
As the faulty vein closes, blood flow will be rerouted to the surrounding healthy veins. As this occurs, the symptoms of the varicose veins will improve. Veins on the surface of the skin that are connected to the treated vein will usually shrink after treatment. The entire process takes about 45 minutes, and can be performed in your physician's office.

What happens afterward?

After the procedure, you will be able to resume normal activities immediately, with the exception of rigorous exercise. Most patients feel no pain, though some experience minimal discomfort. Slight bruising may also occur. Any pain that is felt can be treated with non-prescription pain medication as needed.

As for the results, endovenous laser treatments have been performed for years on thousands of patients. The procedure has proven highly effective with outstanding patient satisfaction. Recurrence rates in the treated veins is very low. With proper monitoring and prevention, recurrence drops to almost zero.

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Q&A

Q | *What are the risks?*

A | One of the greatest advantages of endovenous laser treatment is that the risks are so minimal. With most patients the procedure uses a local anesthetic and a minor entry point for the laser fiber, and side effects are limited to slight bruising. Patients are able to resume everyday activities, except for strenuous exercise, immediately after the procedure.

Q | *How long will everything take?*

A | The procedure itself takes about 45 minutes, and is done in your physician's office. The recovery period is negligible. Feel free to plan the rest of your day following the procedure.

Q | *How soon will I see results?*

A | With the ELVeS® procedure, relief of your varicose vein symptoms occurs immediately.

Q | *Will my insurance cover the procedure?*

A | Most insurance companies cover the procedure but your ELVeS® physician can help check your coverage.

Varicose veins don't have to be a problem any longer. ELVeS® is the answer. Ask your physician about the ELVeS® procedure and find out if it's right for you.

To learn more about varicose veins, talk
to your doctor, or to find a physician
near you, go to
www.varicoseveinslaser.com.



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