

Spring 2005

Vein, Vein Go Away!

By Liz Morrison

Good news for those suffering from unsightly varicose or spider veins. New, minimally invasive procedures not only improve your legs aesthetically but alleviate the pain as well.

According to the Mayo Clinic, symptoms of varicose or spider veins can include an achy or heavy feeling in your legs, throbbing, muscle cramping or swelling in your lower legs. Prolonged sitting or standing can increase the discomfort.

Varicose veins, the larger, ropey looking purple veins, are damaged veins that have lost their ability to return deoxygenated blood back to the heart. Blood leaks back through weakened valves and pools in the vein, causing it to become twisted and distended.

Factors that cause spider veins, the tiny blue or red veins, include genetics, pregnancy, prolonged standing or sitting, injury or similar conditions to varicose veins.

Dr. John Doemeny, an interventional radiologist at RMG Varicose Vein Treatment Center in Bankers Hill, described two effective treatments for eliminating varicose and spider veins. Depending on the severity of each case, these treatments can be used together or separately and cost between \$600 and \$2,900.

With EndoVenous Laser Therapy (EVLT), a laser tipped fiber is injected through a small catheter into the vein closing it off and preventing further blood flow. This procedure requires just a local anesthesia and a mild sedative.

Patients return to normal activity within days and wear support hose for a few weeks after treatment.

Sclerotherapy, frequently performed with EVLT, uses an ultrasound-guided needle and is used primarily to treat spider veins. No anesthesia is required as the procedure is relatively painless. As with EVLT, patients wear support hose after treatment and can resume regular activity within a few days.

“There’s no scar, we go in with a little tiny needle with local anesthesia, said Doemeny. “It all takes about 45 minutes and the recovery time is about two weeks.”

The days of medieval torture to remove ugly varicose veins are gone. Spring is almost here. Why not bring out your shorts skirts and show off those legs!