



Save Face

Sclerotherapy Fact Sheet



Patient information

Sclerotherapy

- Gold standard treatment for unsightly leg veins (spider veins- not varicose veins)
- Prescription only medicine (POM)
- Results can take several months to achieve
- More than one treatment session is required, usually 4- 12 weeks apart
- Usual activities may be resumed immediately after treatment
- Permanent improvement can be achieved on treated veins, but new veins may develop over time.

What is Sclerotherapy?

Sclerotherapy is a treatment for those unsightly small veins on the legs. A drug called a sclerosant is injected directly into the problem veins causing damage which triggers a natural healing response, causing them to fade away over time. ALL sclerosants are prescription only medicines (POMS).

How does it work?

Sclerosants cause damage, or destroy the lining of the vein. The lining of the vein swells and becomes sticky, blood cells clump and attach to the damaged vein wall closing the vein and beginning a healing process which leads to the vein fading away.

More than one treatment is often required, as the body will sometimes repair rather than 'get rid of' the damaged vein.

Used to treat

↳ Unsightly leg veins

Does it hurt?

A tiny needle is used and only the very tip of it is inserted, so the injections are not usually at all painful. There are a choice of drugs commonly used in sclerotherapy. There are drugs that are painless on injection and others that do hurt.

After treatment

Immediately after treatment, your legs will have areas of redness, welts like insect bites and possibly some bruising. It is not uncommon to experience some prickling and itching which is settled with antihistamine (such as hayfever tablets) and will settle within the first couple of hours. You will usually be expected to wear compression hosiery, which plays a part in the treatment process. Any redness or welts will usually settle within hours. Bruising may take a couple of weeks to go. The veins will often look worse (darker) before they get better. Improvement should not be expected in the first 12 weeks.

You will be advised;

Immediately; to take a 10 minute walk. Your practitioner will advise on how long to wear compression hosiery.

First 12 hours; avoid standing for long periods or sitting with feet down, swimming

First 10 days; avoid high impact exercise, extremes of heat or cold, sun bathing, hair removal

How long will it last?

Veins that have been successfully treated are gone for good, however there is no cure for the underlying cause and you may or may not find a need to have further treatment sessions in the future.

Is it safe?

Sclerotherapy is a very safe treatment, but not without any risks or side effects.

Common side effects include;

Immediately following treatment;

- ↘ redness
- ↘ welts not unlike insect bites
- ↘ prickling and or itching

All the above settle within hours

- ↘ bruising which may take up to two weeks to resolve and can take longer
- ↘ Brown 'staining' of the treatment area, which may take up to 18 months to fade

The appearance of new, tiny, red veins in or near the treatment area which usually resolve spontaneously as the treatment course is successful.

Am I suitable for treatment?

There are a number of medical conditions and or medicines that may affect the decision to treat or the treatment plan. A full medical history and assessment of your condition is necessary in advance of any decision to treat. The following is a list of absolute contraindications.

- ↘ Not suitable if you are pregnant or breast feeding
- ↘ Not suitable if you have suffered from severe allergic reactions
- ↘ If you have a history of DVT, phlebitis or cellulitis (not to be confused with Cellulite)
- ↘ If you have just had or are planning a long haul journey within 6 weeks of treatment
- ↘ Obesity
- ↘ Immobility or reduced mobility

Useful websites

The British Association of Sclerotherapists

www.bassclerotherapy.com

Compression Hosiery

www.daylong.co.uk

Consumer Check List

What to Expect

- To be seen by a, doctor, nurse or dentist for your consultation and assessment
- To have sufficient time to consider all the information- avoid making hasty decisions
- To be treated by a doctor, nurse or dentist
- A follow up appointment if necessary or desired

Ask Questions

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| What is this treatment/product? | How many treatments will I need and in what time frame? |
| How does it work? | Are you able to treat complications, should they occur? |
| What are the side effects/risks? | What happens if I am not happy with the result? |
| What are the alternatives I might consider? | Is it painful? How do you minimise pain? |
| What results can I expect? | What aftercare am I expected to perform? |
| What will I look like immediately after? | What will it cost and what are the payment terms? |
| How long will the results last? | |

What to Check

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| You may check the qualifications of a doctor (www.gmc-uk.org), Nurse (www.nmc-uk.org) and dentist(gdc-uk.org) | medicine to be used and make a note of it for future reference, should you later see another clinician. |
| Ask to see the unopened box of product/ | |

Be Safe

- Do not proceed with treatment if you do not feel comfortable with the practitioner
- Do not proceed with treatment if you do not fully understand the information you are given
- Take the necessary time to make your decisions
- Ask the practitioner to show you the product in its unopened package prior to treatment.
- Make a note of the practitioner's name and product used for future reference
- Ask for copies of before and after photographs for your reference
- Do not have treatment in your home, at 'parties' or exhibitions or in environments that are clearly not clean or appropriate.