

Varicose Veins: Your Questions Answered

By Sanjiv Lakhanpal, MD and
Jerrilyn Jutton, MD
Center for Vein Restoration

How common are varicose veins?

About 50-55% of American women and 40-45% of American men suffer from some form of vein problem. Varicose veins affect one out of two people age 50 and older.

Who usually has varicose veins?

Many factors increase a person's chances of developing varicose. These include:

- Increasing age
- Having family members with vein problems, or being born with weak vein valves
- Pregnancy. During pregnancy there is a huge increase in the amount of blood in the body. This can cause veins to enlarge. The expanding uterus also puts pressure on the veins. Varicose veins usually improve within three months after delivery. A growing number of abnormal veins usually appear with each additional pregnancy
- Obesity, leg injury, prolonged standing and other things that weaken vein valves

Why do varicose veins usually appear in the legs?

The force of gravity, the pressure of body weight and the task of carrying blood from the bottom of the body up to the heart make legs the primary location for varicose veins. Compared with other veins in the body, leg veins have the toughest job of carrying blood back to the heart. They endure the most pressure. This pressure can be stronger than the veins' one-way valves.

Are varicose veins painful or dangerous?

Varicose veins usually enlarge and worsen over time. Severe varicose veins can cause health problems:

- They can be debilitating and cause lifestyle-altering symptoms.
- Spider/reticular veins may advance to non-healing sores or skin ulcers can occur on skin tissue around varicose veins.
- There can be ongoing irritation, swelling and painful rashes of the legs.

It is because of these significant issues that the treatment of varicose veins is not a luxury, but a necessity.

What are the symptoms of venous insufficiency?

Some common symptoms of varicose veins include:

- aching pain
- easily tired legs
- leg heaviness

- swelling in the legs (especially at the end of the day)
- darkening of the skin (in severe cases)
- numbness in the legs
- itching or irritated rash in the legs

What should I do if I notice one or more of these symptoms?

Because symptoms can become worse it is important to see a physician who specializes in the treatment of varicose veins.

What are the treatment options that are available?

In many individuals, since varicose veins are a chronic issue, there are several areas that need to be treated. Once

the treatment areas are established by a physical exam and ultrasound study, varicose veins are best treated by either laser or radiofrequency ablation (closure) of the vein where the valves are not working properly.

Is treatment painful and how long is the recovery process?

The good news about the current treatment of varicose veins is that it is relatively pain free and can be done in the comfort of a physician's office. In the past, treatment required a hospital stay and a painful procedure called vein stripping. New techniques and technology have led to the new laser and radio frequency approach

that can be performed in less than one hour and have you back on your feet and back to your activity and/or work (if you so desire) on the same day!

Is the treatment of varicose veins covered by insurance?

Yes, since this is a medical issue that can lead to serious health consequences most insurance companies do cover the treatment of varicose veins. CIGNA is one of the insurance companies that does not cover treatment of venous insufficiency in all of its plans. Most insurance companies, like physicians believe the treatment of varicose veins is not a luxury, but a necessity and should be taken care of immediately.

Center for Vein Restoration



LOVE YOUR LEGS

again!

Do your legs feel tired, achy and heavy?
Do your legs and ankles swell by the end of the day?
Do you have bulgy-veined and painful legs?

**Sanjiv Lakhanpal, M.D.,
Jaime Marquez, M.D., Jerrilyn Jutton, M.D.**

Voted "Top Doctor" by Washingtonian Magazine

CardioThoracic & Vascular Surgery Associates
specializes in laser and radiofrequency treatment of varicose veins. This quick and painless procedure is covered by most insurance plans. You are able to return to your activities or work within 24 hours of this office-based procedure.

1-866-604-1706

Offices in: Annapolis, Dunkirk, Greenbelt, Charlotte Hall,
Rockville, Takoma Park and Washington, D.C.

www.loveyourlegsagain.org