

Treatments for Leg Veins at Whitsunday Cosmedics Skin Clinic

Leg veins: Why they appear and how doctors treat them



Varicose and spider veins: Varicose veins are enlarged veins that often twist and can bulge above the surface of the skin. They may be blue, red, or flesh-colored. Spider veins are usually darker red or blue, and often look like webs. Having spider or varicose veins can affect more than your appearance. These veins can cause serious discomfort. Some varicose veins put you at risk for a complication like a blood clot or open sores on your legs.

Minimally invasive treatment can get rid of or fade leg veins. Treatment can also diminish symptoms like pain and fatigue and prevent complications.

Why we get visible leg veins

Varicose and spider veins are damaged veins. We develop them when tiny, one-way valves inside the veins weaken. In healthy veins, these valves push blood in one direction — back to our heart. When these valves weaken, some blood flows backward and accumulates in the vein. Extra blood in the vein puts pressure on the walls of the vein.

With continual pressure, the vein walls weaken and bulge. In time, we see a varicose or spider vein.

Some people have a higher risk of developing these veins. If blood relatives have them, you have a higher risk. Many people get them because they sit or stand for long periods

most days of the week. These veins also become more common with age and during pregnancy.

Spider veins can also be caused by sunlight, hormonal changes, or an injury.

How doctors treat leg veins

Treatment options range from self-care to minor surgery. A doctor may use one or more of these treatments:

Self-care: Your doctor can give you tips to improve your circulation. These tips include:

- Exercise
- Elevate your legs
- Sit for long periods? Get up and walk around every 30 minutes
- Stand for long periods? Take a break every 30 minutes
- Avoid soaking in hot baths for long periods of time

Self-care tips can help prevent new varicose and spider veins but cannot get rid of existing ones.

Compression stockings: These stockings apply steady pressure to help move the blood back to your heart. The steady pressure also lessens swelling in your lower legs and reduces the risk of getting a blood clot. You'll still have visible leg veins, though.

If you need compression stockings, our doctor can examine you and measure the legs, so that you get the proper size and right amount of pressure.

Sclerotherapy: This is the most common treatment for leg veins. Over the years, doctors have improved sclerotherapy to make it safer and give patients better results. Today, doctors use it to treat spider and small varicose veins.

If you have sclerotherapy, this is what happens during treatment:

- Dr McCann injects a chemical into the spider or varicose vein, which irritates the wall of the vein. Different areas of the vein are injected.
- After the injections, Dr McCann may massage the area.
- A compression stocking or bandage is then placed on each leg.
- You will be observed for a time and then be able to go home.
- To help prevent possible side effects, you will need to take daily walks and wear the compression stockings as directed. Most patients wear the compression stockings for 2 to 3 weeks.

- You can return to work and most activities the next day.

Sclerotherapy causes the walls of the vein to stick together, so the blood cannot flow through it anymore. This improves circulation in the treated leg and reduces swelling. In some cases the veins will be treated with Laser light after the sclerotherapy to improve the chances of treatment success.

Spider veins usually disappear in 3 to 6 weeks. Varicose veins take 3 to 4 months.

To get the best results, you may need 2 or 3 treatments. No anesthesia is needed and in some cases a rebate from Medicare is available to assist with the cost of treatments.

Laser treatments: At Whitsunday Cosmedic Skin Clinic we are equipped with the Gold Standard in vascular treatment- the V Beam Prima Laser.



Small spider veins may disappear immediately after treatment. Larger spider veins and varicose veins will darken, and you'll likely see them for 1 to 3 months before they disappear. To get complete clearing, you may need 3 or more treatments.

Most patients can return to work and many of their normal activities the next day.

After each treatment, some patients need to wear compression stockings for a short time.

Every patient will need to protect the treated area from the sun for 3 to 4 weeks. This helps prevent dark spots from developing. Protecting your skin from the sun year round helps to prevent new spider veins and skin cancer.

Physical exam essential before treatment

A physical exam helps Dr McCann decide if leg vein treatment is safe for you. During the physical exam, Dr McCann will look closely at your leg veins and ask about your medical history.

At Whitsunday Cosmedic Skin Clinic we are also equipped with Ultrasound including Doppler Ultrasound, and Dr McCann will perform an initial ultrasound assessment to assist in planning treatment, and most patients will also be referred for a formal ultrasound examination at a radiology clinic to map the veins and give the highest chance of treatment success.

After reviewing all of the information, Dr McCann can tell you if leg vein treatment is right for you and which treatment would be most effective. Sometimes, more than one type of treatment will be recommended to give you the best results and reduce side effects.