

- Endovenous Laser Treatment: A small laser fiber is inserted into the damaged vein. Pulses of laser light are delivered inside the vein to collapse and seal the vein shut.
- Radiofrequency Occlusion: A small catheter is inserted into the damaged vein. The catheter delivers radiofrequency energy to the vein wall closing it, causing it to heat. As the vein warms, it collapses and seals shut.
- Laser/Light Source Treatment: A light beam is pulsed onto the veins in order to seal them off and cause them to dissolve.
- Surgery: Surgical techniques include ligation, stripping, and ambulatory phlebectomy. Surgery may be performed using local, spinal, or general anesthesia. Patients return home the same day.

**Your exam is scheduled for:**

Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am pm

Place: \_\_\_\_\_


**Where can I find more information about Vein treatments?**

[www.veindirectory.org](http://www.veindirectory.org)

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)

**Visit our Website:**  
[www.palmettofamilymed.com](http://www.palmettofamilymed.com)

# Vein Studies



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## ***What are Varicose Veins?***

Arteries carry blood away from the heart to the legs. Veins carry blood back to the heart from the legs. They are a complex system of blood vessels that have on-way valves to carry the blood back to the heart. Veins are divided into a deep system and superficial system which are connected to one another by perforating veins. The blood usually goes from the superficial system to the deep system, then back to the heart. When the valves do not function, they can “leak” - This is known as venous insufficiency or reflux. This leakage at the valves results in the veins close to the skin surface overfilling and becoming distended. These elongated, rope-like, bulging and twisting veins are varicose veins. The veins most commonly affected are those in the legs.

## ***What causes Varicose Veins?***

Varicose veins occur when the valves in the veins malfunction. This can occur as we get older and our veins lose elasticity; they remain stretched out and valves can no longer close properly. The blood that should be moving towards your heart instead flows backwards and pools in the veins, particularly those at the skin surface.

The following factors increase your risk for developing varicose veins:

- **Age:** Varicose veins usually occur between the ages of 30 and 70.
- **Sex:** Women are more at risk for developing varicose veins than men.

- **Genetics:** A family history of varicose veins increases your risk for developing the condition.
- **Obesity:** Obesity adds pressure on your veins.
- **Activities/occupations:** Activities that require standing for a long period of time can cause varicose veins.
- **Past History of Vein Disease:** A past history of diseases such as thrombophlebitis or deep venous thrombosis is linked to increased risk for varicose veins.

## ***Signs and Symptoms***

- Pain in limb
- Cramp in limb
- Localized skin edema
- Varicose veins with edema, pain
- Swelling of limb
- Skin numbness, paresthesias
- Induration, thickening of the skin
- Restless Leg Syndrome

## ***How are Veins Treated***

Veins that are cosmetically unappealing or cause pain or other symptoms are prime candidates for treatment. There are two general treatment options: conservative methods, such as stockings, and corrective methods, such as sclerotherapy, surgery, and light source/laser treatment. In some cases, a combination of treatment methods works the best.

## ***Treatments***

Self help measures such as exercising, losing weight, elevating the legs, wearing compression stockings and avoiding long periods of standing and sitting can ease the pain and prevent varicose veins from getting worse.

However, if your varicose veins do not respond to these methods or are very severe, the following options are available.

- **Sclerotherapy:** A procedure in which the doctor injects spider or varicose veins, using a small needle, with a solution that irritates the veins. In response, the vein collapses and is reabsorbed.
- **Ultrasound guided sclerotherapy:** Sclerotherapy is done while the doctor visually monitors the vein on an ultrasound screen. This enables treatment of veins that cannot be seen and would otherwise require surgical removal.