

## Advice to Patients

Sclerotherapy is a safe and well established treatment for thread veins on the legs. Although there are a number of alternative treatments, it remains the most reliably successful of them all.

A solution is injected with a very tiny needle, very superficially into the veins, causing the lining of the vein to swell and become sticky. Compression is then applied to close the veins. Over a period of time the vein will heal closed and fade away

Though safe, it is not entirely without risk. The two most common side effects are something called haemosiderin deposition and telangiectatic matting.

Haemosiderin deposition occurs when the vein is not entirely closed, blood is trapped and clots. In some people iron pigments leak from the clot and stains the skin over the vessel brown. These brown marks are usually not permanent but may take 6 - 18 months to fade. They darken when exposed to the sun and will take longer to fade if tanned.

Matting occurs if the fragile vessel is injured during the injection, leaving a mat of tiny veins that look like a blush or a red bruise. Matting usually disappears completely after 6 - 12 months, but if it persists, it can be treated with sclerotherapy if the needle can access the fine vessels and flush the solution gently through.

Other risks are extremely rare but these include:

Allergic reaction - any drug carries risk of allergic reaction. It is quite common for patients to experience some itching and some redness at the treatment site. This is no cause for concern and will pass within a few hours.

If the solution irritates the tissue surrounding the vein, in rare instances blistering can occur. If left alone these can potentially lead to further blistering and scarring.

The drug we use is called Sclerovein. It is widely used in Europe, the USA and the UK but as yet is unlicensed in this country. We use it because, in our opinion it has the least side effects and is painless.

Finally, the results achieved after one treatment vary considerably from one client to another. You should budget for up to 4 treatments 4 - 16 weeks apart and you can expect an improvement in their appearance of 60 - 80%.

In rare cases the treatment has little or no effect. Results cannot be guaranteed.

### *After Care Instructions.*

#### **Before treatment:**

- Do not use bath oils, lotions or creams on your leg for 24 hours before your injections.
- Dress in loose clothing, jogging trousers or skirt and comfortable shoes to accommodate the support hosiery.
- If you are going to be wearing compression stockings bring a suspender belt with you to hold up your support hosiery.
- If you have already been supplied with a support stocking bring it with you on the day of treatment.

#### **After treatment:**

- Take a 10 minute walk immediately after treatment
- Wear your support hosiery day and night for 72 hours; at the end of the 72 hours you may take the stocking off and have a short cool shower or bath. Do not be alarmed that the thread veins look worse, this is normal at this stage.
- Thereafter, wear your support stocking during the day for 7 days; you may take them off at night.
- Avoid extremes of temperature for 14 days ie very hot baths, saunas, sun beds.
- Avoid sun exposure for 4 weeks – pigmentation may take longer to fade.
- Avoid high impact exercise for 2 weeks.
- Avoid waxing of the legs for 4 weeks.
- Elevate your legs as much as possible for the first 2 weeks.
- If you are planning air travel discuss with your practitioner who will advise.
- Consider wearing support hosiery long term to minimise thread vein recurrence.

If you have any further concerns please contact: \_\_\_\_\_