

Illinois Vein
Specialists



A Patient's Guide to Varicose and Spider Veins

*A Center of Excellence in the
Diagnosis and Treatment
of Vein Disease™*

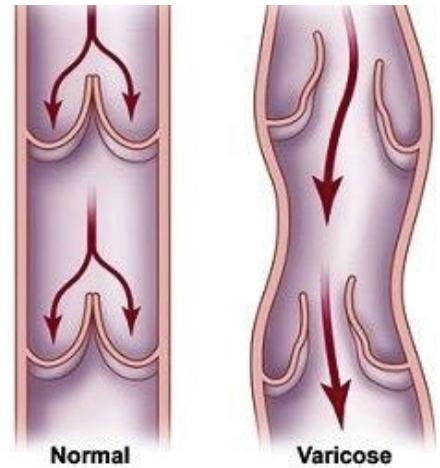
Varicose and Spider Veins

Varicose Veins

BY AGE 45, most if not all of us have seen them either on our own legs or on someone we know.

Varicose veins can be visible on the surface of the skin as large, ropey or bulging veins and are present anywhere from the groin down to the ankle. However, varicose veins can exist even if not visible.

Typically, due to gravity exerting pressure downward on the veins, the vein valves begin to weaken and break over time increasing the pressure on the valve below. Eventually, with most or all of the valves breaking inside the veins, the pressure rises to very high levels. This is called “venous hypertension.” When venous hypertension occurs, the pressure in branch veins, connected to the larger veins, also begins to rise and their valves break in a cascading fashion. If these branches bulge through the skin in a bumpy or rope-like fashion, they are known as varicose veins.



Spider Veins

Spider Veins are small red, purple or blue vessels are easily visible through the skin.

Although the health risk is minimal, they can be unsightly or cause significant leg discomfort after prolonged standing. In some cases, however, spider veins located near the ankles can be an early sign, or the result, of underlying varicose veins.

Additionally, if you have sought and received treatment specifically for your spider veins without permanent results this may be due to underlying vein disease.

Causes of Vein Disease

The unfortunate truth is that if your grandparents and parents and/or other relatives have had varicose or spider veins, you may very well suffer, too. Increasing **age** is another risk factor because aging causes wear and tear on vein valves that regulate blood flow.

Patients also certainly perceive it as more common as they age because the disease has had longer to make its symptoms known, is more advanced, and has done more damage. People suffer unnecessarily for years. **It is important to understand that vein disease is not merely a function of age; it does occur in young people.**

There is also a relationship between **multiple pregnancies**, hormones and vein disease, but this does not mean a woman should wait until she has had all her planned pregnancies before seeking relief.

It is a fallacy to believe that the same veins, once treated, will return. During the healing process, the damaged veins disappear altogether and are absorbed by the body. **We repeat— vein disease is a real**



Spider veins are the most common vein problem and typically occur more frequently in women.

DID YOU KNOW?

The primary cause of vein disease is **heredity**, accounting for perhaps 80% of cases.

disease and should be treated as soon as it is discovered. Vein disease is also related to years of standing without the benefit of support hose, obesity, and injury.

Symptoms of Vein Disease

The symptoms of vein disease are many, which again is an indication that this is a disease and not just a cosmetic issue.

Obvious signs include, but are not limited to:

- Varicose veins and Spider veins
- Swelling of legs and/or ankles
- Tired, achy legs, heaviness, fatigue
- Scaly, itchy rashes and thickening of the skin
- Slow or non-healing wounds on the ankles
- Darkening of the skin on the legs
- Restless Leg Syndrome

All of the preceding symptoms can be the result of an underlying venous circulatory problem and will not get better if it is ignored; it will likely become worse. Further, vein disease complicates other medical conditions as well.

Treatment of Varicose And Spider Veins

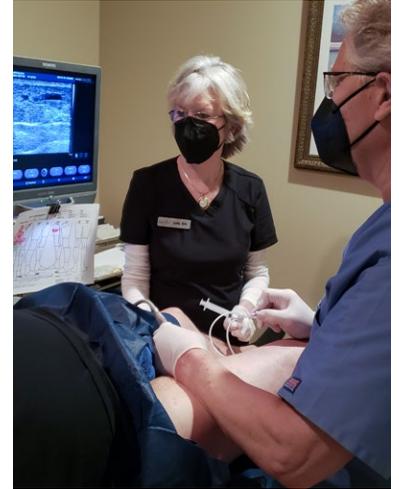
Varicose Veins

Many patients with vein disease who, were treated in the past, have had experience with a medical procedure known as “vein stripping.” Vein stripping, unfortunately, is quite painful, requires a long recovery and is only successful about 50% of the time. It is an antiquated and ineffective treatment option and not part of the modern vein disease treatment regimen.

New technology has virtually eliminated the need to use sur-

gery in the treatment of varicose veins. The procedure for varicose vein removal is referred to as Endovenous Laser Therapy (EVLT). It takes less than an hour to perform and only requires local anesthesia at the treatment site.

By delivering just the right wavelength of laser energy to the affected vein, the incompetent veins will close. The body automatically routes the blood to healthy veins. This immediately reverses the venous hypertension and starts the healing process from the moment the patient stands up after the procedure! As an added bonus, there can be a significant improvement in cosmetic appearance.



Spider Veins

Most spider veins are treated via Sclerotherapy, a technique in which a very fine needle injects a solution directly into the veins causing the vein lining to close preventing blood flow. The veins are then absorbed by the body and disappear.

Sclerotherapy sessions typically last 30-40 minutes and are an extremely effective way to treat veins on the legs.

DID YOU KNOW?

Endovenous laser therapy for treatment of varicose veins has less than a 2% rate of recurrence.

Will Insurance Cover My Procedure

Generally, insurance will cover most of the treatment cost if the Doctor does diagnose some form of venous insufficiency (varicose veins). If it is determined in your Ultrasound Scan - used in your initial consultation - that you in fact do have varicose veins, the Doctor will write a letter to your insurance company for pre-certification prior to any procedure to ensure that your treatment is approved. Spider veins, however, are often found to be primarily cosmetic and thus are not covered by insurance.

Did you Know?
Varicose veins
disease is a real
disease and is
covered by most
insurances.

Illinois Vein Specialists

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It is important to note that each insurance company reimburses different amounts for the various treatments offered. At Illinois Vein Specialists, we will work with you and your insurance provider to ensure that you receive the highest reimbursement possible.

Choosing The Right Vein Doctor

Choosing the right Doctor to treat your veins can be a challenge, especially because the contemporary treatment of vein disease is quite different than what was done even as recently as 10 years ago. This is due, in part, to the recent U.S. Board Certified medical specialty called Phlebology (now known as Venous and Lymphatic Medicine) which focuses solely on the diagnosis and treatment of vein disease.

In addition, the modern practice of vein medicine requires mastery of specific medical technology. The best practitioners are Certified in venous ultrasonography - using a Doppler Duplex Ultrasound Scan. Being certified is key to ensuring that you receive the very best treatment plan and reduce your risk for recurrence. Vein disease is a serious medical condition and should be treated accordingly.



Dr. Jack Perlmutter

Our Philosophy at Illinois Vein Specialists

At Illinois Vein Specialists, we care just as much about the medicine and the specialized practice of Venous and Lymphatic Medicine (formerly known as Phlebology) as we do our patients. We understand that when you choose a doctor you want to go

Find a board-certified venous
and lymphatic disease specialist

to someone you know, like and trust, and honestly so do we.

We know that patients come to us most often from satisfied patient referrals, but we encourage you to do your own research and ask around. In the end no matter where you live or who you decide to have treat your varicose or spider veins find someone who focuses only on diagnosing and treating varicose and spider veins.

Our Team at Illinois Vein Specialists

Illinois Vein Specialists opened in 2009 and has a staff of a dozen — including multiple skilled medical assistants, ultrasound specialists and administrative personnel, backed by state-of-the-art medical equipment and systems.

Illinois Vein Specialists has helped over 10,000 patients from Buffalo Grove, Cary, Elgin, Hoffman Estates, Algonquin, Palatine, Vernon Hills, Crystal Lake, Lake Zurich, Fox River Grove, Mundelein, Grayslake, Wauconda, Chicago, and all areas of Barrington, Illinois and have developed a reputation as an exemplar, a Venous & Lymphatic Center of Excellence. ■

