

Zanesville Vascular Surgery is pleased you have chosen us to help with your vein problems. During your consultation, we have presented a great deal of information regarding our procedures, work-up, and possible treatment options for you. We understand that this can be a little overwhelming and frequently difficult to retain throughout your treatment course. We hope this written explanation and treatment plan will help during those times.

The varicose veins that you see are frequently only the "tip of the iceberg" and are in large part arising from a highly pressurized underlying vein system. The increased pressure comes not from a clotting problem, but rather from a blood flow abnormality in your veins. This is called REFLUX and causes blood to travel in the wrong direction in your veins, leading to excess blood pooling in your veins. All of the procedures we offer are designed to close the refluxing veins and re-route blood flow to healthier veins.

After your initial consultation, we use a tool to look for venous reflux. This is the venous ultrasound or DOPPLER examination. This test looks at the deep veins, as well as the superficial veins. It gives us an exact road map of where your vein problems are so that we can start treating them at the earliest location where reflux begins. The Doppler allows us to plan your treatment course.

RADIOFREQUENCY Closure (VNUS) or LASER Ablation (Venasure) are two procedures that are used to repair the refluxing saphenous vein systems. In each leg, you have one GREATER and one LESSER SAPHENOUS VEIN. These procedures are minimally invasive techniques that only use a needle and catheter to heat the refluxing vein, thereby sealing the vein shut and not allowing any blood to travel in that vein. This cuts off the pressure to more superficial varicose veins. Please understand, these procedures are only a part of your treatment plan and will not themselves completely resolve the varicose veins that you see. More superficial veins can then be treated with powered phlebectomy (Trivex) or injection sclerotherapy because they are no longer exposed to high venous pressures. These secondary procedures will eliminate the varicosities that you see and that are so disabling.

**ULTRASOUND GUIDED FOAM SCLEROTHERAPY:** During this phase of your treatment plan you will be scheduled for one or more office visits where we will use the ultrasound machine to guide injection therapy of your varicose veins. This is an extremely powerful technique that creates an inflammatory reaction in your veins. The veins shut down and your body will absorb what's left of your veins. You will be able to resume your activities right after you get these injections. We want you to walk for 20-30 minutes after your treatment. The inflammation may create some redness for a short time and if your veins are large, there may be some lumpiness until your body can completely absorb them. For very large veins this can take several months.

TRIVEX or Transilluminated powered phlebectomy is a minimally invasive procedure performed at a local outpatient surgical center. A lighted scope is passed under the skin and then the offending varicose veins are removed using a specialized powered surgical device. Small incisions are required allowing for much shorter recovery times than the traditional "vein stripping".

SPIDER VEINS: Spider veins are blood vessels just below the skin that have become enlarged. They enlarge because of high venous pressure in the skin, frequently because of connections to other veins that have reflux. Spider veins can cause symptoms of itching, stinging and even pain. Despite this, insurance companies consider spider vein therapy cosmetic and do not offer coverage. Spider vein treatment with sclerotherapy and laser therapy is very effective. We would be glad to provide those services, but they are not reimbursed by your medical insurance company.

COMPRESSION THERAPY: It is essential that you commit to compression of the veins you have had treated, at least for a short time. This will be done in the form of compression stockings with or without an additional compression wrap around the leg. Compression will ensure the best possible outcome to eliminate your veins. The closure of your veins will not be secure immediately after your procedure. There is a period of time where the vein closure will be 'soft'. Compression will keep the pressure out of your veins until your body can solidify the closure and make it durable. Without compression in that early period you will be more likely to fail therapy and have your veins re-open. This period lasts a few days for some and as long as a week for others. During your initial consultation or during your follow-up office visit you will be measured for stockings that will fit you well.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU HAVE COMPRESSION HOSE BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURES.**

TREATMENT COURSE: We are very proud to be able to offer you state-of-the-art minimally invasive, non-surgical vein therapy. This approach takes longer than surgical treatment, but offers you the advantage of procedures that are minimally invasive with little pain, no trauma, and minimal interruption in your daily life. In order to accomplish this, we break your treatment plan into multiple small steps to minimize the negative effect on you and to maximize the outcome of resolving your varicose veins and venous insufficiency.

## INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR VEIN THERAPY

MOST INSURANCE COMPANIES PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR VARICOSE VEIN TREATMENT IF THEY ARE SYMPTOMATIC.

SOME INSURANCE PLANS HAVE NO VEIN CARE BENEFITS. ALL INSURANCE PLANS ARE DIFFERENT EVEN IF THEY ARE PROVIDED THROUGH THE SAME EMPLOYER OR THROUGH THE SAME INSURANCE COMPANY NAME.

NO INSURANCE COMPANY, INCLUDING MEDICARE, PROVIDES COVERAGE FOR THE TREATMENT OF VARICOSE VEINS WHEN PERFORMED SOLELY FOR COSMETIC PURPOSES OR WHEN VEINS ARE ASYMPTOMATIC.

TYPICALLY, THE FIRST LINE OF TREATMENT FOR INSURANCE COMPANIES TO APPROVE COVERAGE FOR TREATMENT IS A THREE to SIX MONTH TRIAL OF CONSERVATIVE THERAPY.

INSURANCE COVERAGE IS CONTINGENT ON DOCUMENTING ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. FAILURE OF CONSERVATIVE MANAGEMENT FOR 3-6 MONTHS:

Conservative management may consist of:

- a. leg elevation
- b. compression therapy with stockings ( needs to be prescribed)
- C. medical therapy
- d. weight loss.

2. ASSOCIATED CLINICAL CONDITIONS:

- a. Pain in the affected extremity that results in impaired mobility or inability to perform activities of daily living
- b. Varicose veins that are symptomatic can cause cramping, throbbing, burning, heaviness, fatigue, swelling, inflammation, skin discoloration etc.
- C. Recurrent phlebitis or thrombophlebitis
- d. Refractory dependent edema
- e. Persistent stasis dermatitis or stasis skin changes

**INSTEAD OF FAILURE OF CONSERVATIVE THERAPY, ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

1. DOCUMENTATION OF LEG ULCERATION DUE TO SAPHENOUS VEIN INSUFFICIENCY THAT HAS FAILED CONSERVATIVE THERAPY.
2. RECURRENT BLEEDING FROM THE SAPHENOUS VEIN OR OTHER VARICOSE VEINS.
3. HISTORY OF A SINGLE EPISODE OF BLEEDING

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED BY INSURANCE FOR APPROVAL OF COVERAGE:

1. History and Physical Examination that supports a diagnosis of Symptomatic Varicose Veins
2. Proof of trial of conservative therapy and failure of same. May require proof of prescription written for compression hose or documents from referring physician showing when trial of conservative therapy was begun.
3. Performance of appropriate tests to confirm the presence, location, and size of incompetent and refluxing veins.
4. Pictures
5. Referring physician records documenting the presence and initial treatment of symptomatic varicose veins.

INSURANCE PLANS WILL NOT CONSIDER THE TREATMENT OF ASYMPTOMATIC VEINS AS REASONABLE AND MEDICALLY NECESSARY NO MATTER HOW LARGE THE VEINS ARE.

OUR OFFICE WILL GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO HELP YOU THROUGH THIS PROCESS. WE FEEL THAT IF YOU UNDERSTAND THESE FACTS AT THE OUTSET, YOU CAN HELP US ACHIEVE INSURANCE APPROVAL FOR YOUR VEIN CARE. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND, THIS CAN BE A VERY VAGUE, UNCLEAR, UNFAIR, AND FRUSTRATING PROCESS AT TIMES. IF WE PRESENT LIMITATIONS TO YOU, THEY ARE NOT IMPOSED BY OUR OFFICE, RATHER BY YOUR INSURANCE PLAN.

**PLEASE NOTE:** THIS INFORMATION APPLIES TO INSURANCE COVERAGE ONLY. IF YOU DESIRE TO ARRANGE A FEE FOR SERVICE PLAN AND PAY FOR YOUR COVERAGE, ALL VEIN CARE MODALITIES ARE AVAILABLE.

The Transilluminated Powered Phlebectomy (Trivex) procedure requires the assistance of a qualified Surgical Assistant to perform safely. If your Medical Insurance provider does not cover "First Assistant" fees, you will be responsible for this amount.