

Ultrasound-guided endovenous laser ablation

These instructions are intended for printing. The instructions contain sections to be filled in.

Superficial venous insufficiency is treated with endovenous laser ablation when the vein requiring treatment is located in the thigh or calf. This method is also suitable for treating faulty communicating veins that are connected to deep veins. Very twisted, superficial or small veins cannot be treated using this technique

Procedure

This procedure is performed in day surgery in an operating room under local anaesthetic. The surgeon uses ultrasound guidance to insert the treatment catheter into the insufficient vein. The catheter is used to produce heat energy in the wall of the vein. As a result, the wall of the vein will shrink and the vein will close tight. The treatment area is anaesthetised with local anaesthetic before the heat treatment. Usually heat treatment causes no pain and takes about 10 minutes.

As with any medical procedure, radiofrequency (RF) and laser treatment involve some risks and complications are a possibility. However, this procedure is considered safer than surgery and is very safe in general, meaning that serious complications are extremely rare. Extremely rare complications are skin burns, deep vein thrombosis in the leg, pulmonary embolism and infection.

After the treatment

As an important part of endovenous laser ablation, a two-week-long compression stocking treatment will be begun after the procedure. The bandage and stocking applied during the procedure should be worn day and night for three days and then only in the daytime for the following 11 days. After the first two days, the stocking can be removed for the duration of a shower. You can go to sauna a week after the procedure. In good time before the procedure, buy Class 2 medical compression stockings that come up to your thigh and have been accurately measured to fit you.

Avoid strenuous activities for the first few weeks after the procedure. Avoid air travel for one month after the procedure. If needed, we recommend you use paracetamol (for example Panadol) and localised cold therapy to ease the pain and that you only use anti-inflammatory painkillers (for example Burana) when needed.

Paracetamol

Anti-inflammatory painkiller

Sick leave will usually be required for one to two days.

There is usually some bruising in the treatment area, but it will disappear in about two weeks. Sometimes hard lumps appear in the veins under the skin which can be felt but not seen. These will disappear over time, within one to six months. Temporary pigmentation and sensation irregularities may sometimes occur along the route of the vein. How quickly they clear depends on the individual.

Follow-up treatment

When needed, the treatment of local varicose veins will take place three to four months after the endovenous laser ablation, when the remaining varicose veins that have usually shrunk by now are treated by sclerotherapy.

The advantages of this treatment:

- No large surgery cuts (less pain, bruising and reduced risk of infection). Local varicose veins can be removed through small incisions in the skin.
- No overnight stay at the hospital
- A good end result and alleviation of symptoms comparable to surgery
- Short sick leave and a quick return to normal activities, as quick as one to two days
- Risks are low and complications are rare
- Patient satisfaction is better than after a surgery

The disadvantages of this treatment:

- Pigmentation irregularities (brownish areas) may appear along the route of the vein and it may take time for them to get lighter or disappear; a small proportion of patients, 0–5%, may have permanent pigmentation irregularities
- The long-term results of the treatment (more than five years) are not yet known

Day Surgery Unit on weekdays 7.00–15.00, telephone 06 213 1552

Surgical Outpatient Clinic Monday to Thursday 8.00–11.00, Friday 9.00–11.00, telephone 06 213 1522

Your own health Centre or occupational health clinic

Telephone nursing services from 15.00–08.00 on Monday–Thursday and from 14.00–08.00 on Friday and 24 hours a day during weekends and on midweek holidays, telephone 116 117

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This instruction is intended for our patients who are in care relationship.