

Laser treatment of varicose veins

Venous insufficiency because of varicose veins is caused by failure of the venous valves of the leg, which makes the blood in the veins flow in the wrong direction. The symptoms of varicose veins are leg fatigue, heaviness, swelling, pain, itch and skin changes. If the condition lasts for a long time, the increased venous pressure may cause leg ulcers.

How to prepare yourself at home for the procedure

- You may eat normally in the morning of the day of the procedure.
- If you wish, you may take your own car to clinic.
- Please contact the clinic if you are on a course of antibiotics or NSAID-drugs.
- Purchase a compression stocking (compression class 2) in advance. The stocking should fit the premeasured, individual dimensions of your lower extremity up to the level of the thigh. Usually, one such stocking is enough. Use the stocking for a few days before the procedure so that you get used to it. The procedure will not be carried out unless you have an individually measured, proper compression stocking.
- Do not put the compression stocking on in the morning of the procedure.

During the procedure

A substantial volume of local anesthetic will be injected in several sites of the diseased vein, and this may feel uncomfortable. If needed, smaller veins can be foam treated at the same time. After the procedure, the puncture holes will be covered with plasters and the compression stocking will be put on. The procedure takes about 1.5 hours. After the procedure you will be asked to walk around in the clinic for about half an hour. Before you leave for home the nurse will check that everything is ok.

At home after the procedure

- Walk and move as usual. Avoid actual exercise for 2 weeks.
- Use the compression stocking for 2 weeks.
 - for 5 days after the procedure, use the compression stocking all the time (day and night, also when taking a shower); for the next 9 days use the stocking in the daytime.
 - showering without the stocking is allowed after 5 days.
- Sauna bathing is allowed 2 weeks after the procedure.
- You may remove the plasters one day after the procedure.

- For pain management, try local cold treatment (cold gel pack or ice cube bag) or paracetamol (acetaminophen) (e.g., Panadol®, Pamol®).
- The physician will prescribe one week of sick leave.
- You need to avoid air travel for one month after the procedure.

Firm strands and skin changes

The procedure causes an inflammatory reaction within the veins and this results in the veins becoming firm and feeling hard under the skin. Brown discoloration will appear around the veins. After the procedure, you may feel tender, painful lumps in the treated veins. These changes usually disappear in a few months.

If you experience problems, contact the clinic or the emergency services of your region.

This is what you should do, especially if the leg feels very painful after the procedure, swells substantially despite the compression stocking or the calf area is red and feels warm. The risk of getting a deep vein clot is small (around 1 %), but it does exist.