



Patient Information for **Endovenous Laser Therapy and Ambulatory Phlebectomy**

Introduction:

If you suffer from problems related to varicose and spider veins, you are not alone. It is estimated that more than 80 million Americans suffer from some form of venous disorder. Symptoms, often made worse by prolonged standing, include feelings of fatigue, heaviness, aching, burning, throbbing, itching, cramping, and restlessness of the legs. Leg swelling can occur. Severe varicose veins can compromise the nutrition of the skin and lead to eczema, inflammation or even ulceration of the lower leg.

While some people seek treatment for cosmetic improvement, many seek relief from pain. Help is available.

Over the last few years, a technique utilizing laser energy delivered endovenously (directly inside the vein) has been developed to treat venous insufficiency. In this procedure, a laser will be used to deliver the laser energy via a small laser fiber that is inserted into your vein to close the vessel. Endovenous laser therapy is performed with twilight sedation for your added comfort. After a short recovery period, you will walk immediately following the laser procedure.

Procedure Description:

At your first visit, the doctor will interview you and take a medical history. You will receive a duplex ultrasound imaging (a machine which allows the doctor to visualize the veins and record their flow, size and shape.)

If you need the Endovenous Laser Therapy to close an incompetent leg vein, a surgery date is scheduled. The procedure begins with the insertion of an IV through which medication is administered by an anesthesiologist to help you have a comfortable twilight experience. The appropriate leg will be prepped with betadine and draped a sterile manner. The procedure is performed with ultrasound guidance to ensure proper placement of the laser fiber and the vein is closed. A local anesthetic will be used around the greater saphenous vein and any ambulatory phlebectomy (removal of bulging veins) for added comfort and to protect the surrounding tissue.

If you have large superficial varicose veins, the doctor will mark those before the procedure start. The removal of these bulging veins is called Ambulatory Phlebectomy. Tiny incisions (stitches are generally not necessary) are made to remove those veins that may leave small scars, which often fade in time.

After the laser ablation and/or ambulatory phlebectomy procedure, you may have steristrips and/or a large bandage over the puncture sites as well as cotton roll with an elastic

dressings wrap on your leg. A compression stocking will be applied over this dressing. This needs to stay dry and intact for 3 days. After which, you can remove at home.

You will need to schedule a 1 week follow-up appointment for an ultrasound examination of the treated vein. Occasionally, a repeat laser treatment is necessary.

Risks and Discomforts:

If you undergo endovenous laser therapy for the treatment of varicose veins and venous insufficiency, your symptoms of the varicose veins may improve, remain the same, or worsen.

The potential side effects include but are not limited to: thermal injury(burn) to the overlying skin or intervening tissue that could lead to scarring; perforation of (puncture) or damage to the vein causing bleeding and bruising; breakage of the laser fiber; superficial phlebitis (inflammation of the vein); parasthesia (numbing or prickling sensation); hyperpigmentation (dark of the overlying skin; infection; creation of a blood clot which could dislodge); or neovascularization (growth of new veins).

Alternative Treatments:

Alternative treatments include wearing graduated compression stockings, surgical ligation and stripping, ambulatory phlebectomy, ultrasound-guided sclerotherapy or a combination of these treatments.



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Preoperative Instructions:

- Shower or bathe the morning of your procedure.
- Arrive 1 hour early. You **MUST** have someone to drive you home due to the twilight sedation given.
- Nothing to eat or drink after midnight. This includes hard candy and gum.
- If you are on medications for high blood pressure, take your medications with a small sip of clear fluid as early as possible.
- If you are diabetic, check your blood sugar. Do not take your insulin or other oral diabetic medications unless instructed.
- If you take Coumadin or Plavix, - _____ taking these medications ____ days prior to your scheduled procedure. Resume taking these medications as prescribed by your doctor the next day. You make take your Aspirin.
- If you have a wound that requires a specific dressing, bring your supplies with you.
- If you have compression stockings, bring them with you.
- Avoid wearing jewelry. Any valuables should be left with the person driving you home.

Your surgery date: _____

Your surgery time: _____