

## **Treatment of Varicose Veins by Ambulatory Phlebectomy**

One of the most effective treatments for eliminating both large and small bulging varicose veins is their surgical removal by a procedure called **ambulatory phlebectomy**. The varicose veins are removed by special instruments through small holes ( $\cong$  1-2 mm in diameter) made on the skin. Often, the wounds are so small that after two months, they are hardly visible, and at six months, no signs of surgery can be found.

At the end of the procedure, the operated leg is tightly bandaged, and the patient will walk in the recovery area to verify that all is going smoothly. After a brief period of observation, the patient may go home. Not only will the patient not need an extensive recovery period, but usually walking and being active immediately after the procedure is strongly encouraged.

A few days after the ambulatory phlebectomy, all bandages are removed and compression stockings are worn for several weeks until complete healing occurs. This compression period helps to obtain the complete resolution of all traces of the procedure.

### **Treatment Sessions**

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Sometimes, a leg has an extended network of varicose veins. In those cases, the procedure is not completed in a single session, but sub-divided into two or three sessions. In this case, the patient has to come in for treatment more than once.

### **Long-Term Treatment**

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Removing all the varicose veins does not mean that the problem is solved for a patient's entire life. At times, new varicose veins may appear. These are related to familial (genetic) and individual tendencies, job and physical activity, body weight, pregnancies, and other less-defined factors. It is for these reasons that we recommend scheduling an appointment with VCU Vein Care once a year to check venous circulation.

### **Complications**

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Serious complications are possible with any kind of procedure, although extremely rare with ambulatory phlebectomy. However, side effects such as blister formation, wound infection, visible scars, bruising or hematomas along the course of the removed varicose vein, and loss of sensation in small areas, may occur. Most of the time, these events run a limited course and resolve without any long-term problems.

**For questions or to schedule an appointment, please call VCU Vein Care at (804) 628-4680.**