

V03lite Varicose Veins Surgery

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at Joondalup Health Campus for a copy.

Write questions or notes here:



**HEALTH CONSUMERS'
COUNCIL**
YOUR VOICE ON HEALTH

This document will give you information about varicose veins surgery. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What are varicose veins?

Varicose veins are enlarged and twisted veins in your leg. They tend to run in families and are made worse by pregnancy and if you do a lot of standing.

Veins in your legs contain many one-way valves to help the upward flow of blood back to your heart.

If the valves fail to work properly, blood can flow in the wrong direction, causing varicose veins (see figure 1).

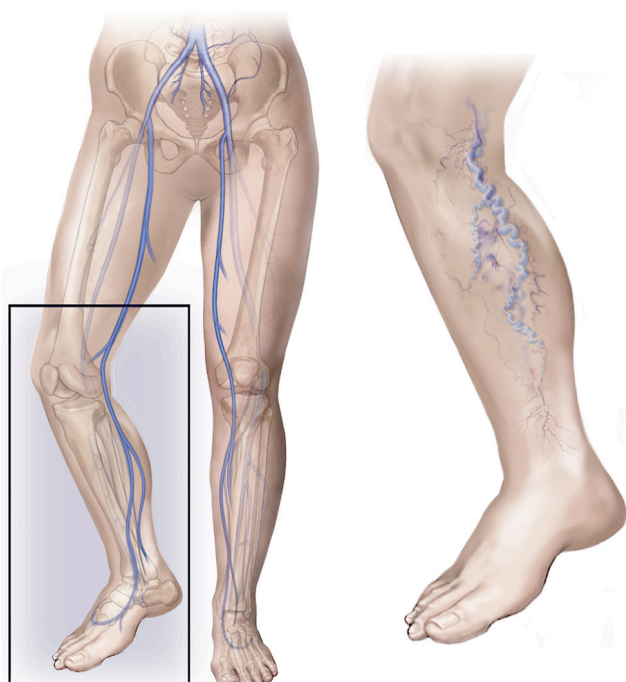


Figure 1
Varicose veins

What are the benefits of surgery?

You should no longer have varicose veins and your symptoms should improve. Surgery should help prevent the symptoms and complications that varicose veins cause.

Are there any alternatives to varicose veins surgery?

Support stockings can often help the symptoms caused by varicose veins.

There are other treatments such as injections (foam sclerotherapy), and using radio-frequency or laser energy (endovenous ablation).

What does the operation involve?

The operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic. The operation usually takes 20 minutes to three hours.

Your surgeon may disconnect the superficial veins from the deep veins in your legs through a cut on your groin or the back of your knee. They will probably make many small cuts along the length of the varicose veins and remove them. Often the main varicose vein is 'stripped out' using a special instrument.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring
- Blood clots

2 Specific complications

- Developing a lump under a wound
- Numbness or a tingling sensation
- Damage to nerves
- Continued varicose veins
- Developing thread veins
- Swelling of your leg
- Major injury to the main arteries, veins or nerves of your leg

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home the same day or the day after.

You should be able to return to work within a few days, depending on your type of work.

As long as your wounds have healed, you should be able to carry out normal activities as soon as you are comfortable.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Varicose veins can come back.

Summary

Varicose veins are a common problem and can lead to complications if left untreated. Support stockings can help to control symptoms but will not remove the varicose veins.

Acknowledgements

Author: Mr Bruce Braithwaite MChir FRCS
Illustrations: Medical Illustration Copyright © Nucleus
Medical Art. All rights reserved. www.nucleusinc.com

**This document is intended for information
purposes only and should not replace advice
that your relevant health professional would
give you.**