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Vein Laser Treatment for Varicose & Spider Veins

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Varicose Veins Before & After Treatment

What are varicose veins?

Varicose Veins, or Venous Insufficiency, are created when faulty valves in the leg's veins inhibit the re-circulation of the blood back to the heart. Because these valves do not close properly, the blood cannot overcome gravity's effects and begins to flow backward and pool in the veins. This backflow is called *reflux*. When veins have reflux, they dilate, or *varicose*, under the pressure of the increased amount of blood. They become visible and appear as bulging, thickened, orropy masses on the legs.

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What are the symptoms of varicose veins?

- Aching pain
- Leg fatigue or heaviness following light to moderate exertion
- Leg pain and fatigue that worsen throughout the day
- Need to elevate legs to alleviate symptoms.
- Skin discoloration and ulceration are indicative of severe case and may be difficult to treat.

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What are the risk factors for varicose veins?

- Age
- Family History
- Being female
- Pregnancy (Multiple pregnancies contribute greatly to varicose veins)

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How is venous insufficiency diagnosed?

To diagnose venous insufficiency, an interventional radiologist uses ultrasound guidance to examine the anatomy of your veins, the valve structures and function, and the levels of blood flow to determine the extent of the venous insufficiency. The radiologist will

study deep and superficial veins, including the greater saphenous vein, to identify refluxing veins and establish which veins are capable of handling additional blood flow, should you be a candidate for the minimally invasive treatment called vein ablation.

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What is vein ablation?

Vein Ablation is a minimally invasive, outpatient procedure where an interventional radiologist uses imaging guidance to insert a narrow catheter through a tiny nick in the skin. The catheter is then guided through the vein to the greater saphenous vein in the thigh. Heat from laser or radiofrequency energy is directed into the vein to seal it from the inside and close it off. A local anesthetic is used to minimize any discomfort.

Because reflux of the greater saphenous vein often causes varicose veins in the area below the thigh, the radiologist may seal off this vein to shrink varicose veins in the lower leg.

After the abnormal vein is sealed off, healthy veins begin to carry more of the blood flow and restore normal function. The treated vein is absorbed into the body.

The FDA has cleared this procedure, also called Endoluminal Laser Ablation of the Greater Saphenous Veins (ELAS).

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What are the benefits of vein ablation?

- Treatment of 1 leg in 1 hour or less* (*compression bandage follow-up treatment is required)
- Immediate relief of symptoms
- Resume normal activity right away
- No scarring—insertion point is size of pencil point
- Minimal pain, relieved with over-the-counter pain relievers

The vein ablation success rate is 93 to 95% over two years, which is superior to the success rates of surgical ligation or stripping.

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Other minimally invasive or non-invasive treatments for veins

- Ambulatory phlebectomy can be used to treat varicose veins that are not the result of reflux of the greater saphenous vein. Using specific tools, the physician removes the poorly functioning vein through a tiny incision. Under local anesthesia, the procedure takes less than an hour and allows rapid recovery without interruption of routine activity.
- Injection sclerotherapy is commonly used to treat spider veins but is also another treatment option for varicose veins. Using exceptionally thin needle, the radiologist injects a solution to shrink the vein. This procedure often follows vein ablation to eliminate any persistent spider veins.
- Spider veins, the small visible blue or red blood vessels, respond especially well to laser treatment through the skin to the targeted blood vessels and gradually disappear. The number of treatments varies from person to person. Side effects are minimal and uncommon.

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How much does the treatment cost and is it covered by insurance?

Cost varies depending on the number and severity of veins which require treatment. Your estimated cost will be determined during your consultation.

Insurance coverage for venous insufficiency treatments is based on medical necessity for symptom relief and the patient's treatment history.

Medicare now covers the ELAS treatment for varicose veins. Please call 239.931.6399 for details.

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Why should I go to Radiology Regional Center for this treatment?

Our **Interventional radiologists** are **board certified** physicians specifically trained in using imaging guidance to perform minimally invasive, targeted treatment such as vein ablation. Their experience with X-rays, ultrasound, MRI, and other diagnostic imaging, is beneficial in vein ablation as they are especially proficient in guiding instruments, such as catheters, through the body to treat conditions and disease.

Interventional radiologists receive specialized training and are certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties. They have fellowship training in minimally invasive interventions using imaging guidance. Interventional radiology provides alternatives to traditional surgical treatment.

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How do I schedule a consultation?

Please call 239.931.6399 to schedule your consultation.

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Where is this procedure offered?

- [Bonita Beach Road, Bonita Springs](#)

More questions? Please call us.

If you have questions or would like more information please call us at 239.931.6399.

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