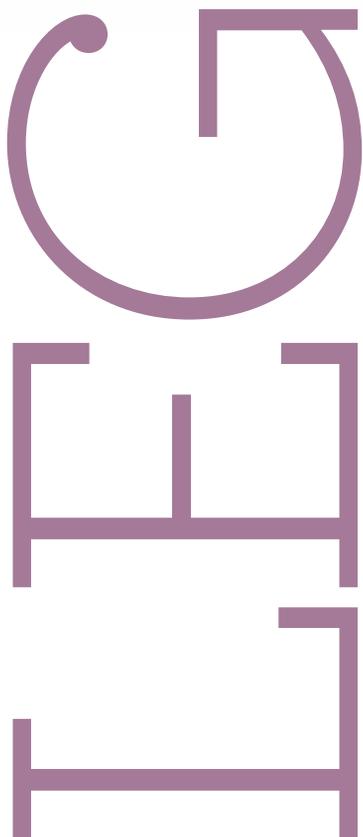




SHOW SOME



Varicose veins are unsightly—and they can signal larger problems. Here’s how you can make them disappear

If you have varicose veins, you are not alone; more than 25 million Americans suffer from uncomfortable and unsightly veins.

Varicose veins develop from venous insufficiency, which is when a vein wall weakens or a valve begins to work incorrectly. Recirculating blood that should be moving toward the heart instead moves away. This causes blood to pool and pressure to build. Veins become twisted, enlarged and, sometimes, painful.

One in five adults has some degree of venous insufficiency. Nearly 25 percent of women and 15 percent of men are affected. Varicose veins are also common in people older than 60.

Veins that are unsightly, cause pain or show other symptoms are prime candidates for treatment.

“Venous insufficiency or varicose veins are not just cosmetic issues. If not properly treated, symptoms can progress,” says Brandon Kang, M.D., a pioneer in vein treatment at Gwinnett Medical Center–Duluth. “I have seen leg ulcerations from chronic venous stasis caused by varicose veins. Ulcerations can become infected and cause more serious medical problems.”

THEN AND NOW

In years past, surgery may have been the only option for varicose vein therapy. Surgical ligation and vein stripping were commonly performed. During ligation, a surgeon makes a small incision and ties off the vein near the groin. During vein stripping, several incisions are made, a metal rod is inserted into the affected vein, and the vein is pulled or stripped out. Both of these procedures typically require general anesthesia and require longer recovery periods.

Today, however, surgery is generally not required. GMC-Duluth offers both conservative and nonsurgical methods to treat varicose veins. Conservative treatments include compression stockings and leg elevation. Nonsurgical corrective methods include sclerotherapy and laser treatment. No two veins are the same and treatment options are individually based on the level of reflux, or backward flow of blood, in the affected veins.

Sclerotherapy can relieve the symptoms that are caused by spider veins and small varicose veins. During the procedure, a tiny needle is used to inject the affected vein with medication that irritates the lining of the vein. In response, the vein collapses and is reabsorbed into the body. Treated spider or small varicose veins then are no longer visible.

REVOLUTIONARY VEIN TREATMENT

One of the most effective and newest methods to treat varicose veins is a nonsurgical laser treatment using the VenaCure EVLT endovenous laser system. VenaCure EVLT uses laser energy that pulses through the vein, causing the vein to collapse and seal shut. The procedure is minimally invasive, lasts less than 45 minutes and can be performed in the physician's office. The results are more than 95 percent effective.

"Laser treatment of varicose veins has revolutionized vein treatment and is quickly becoming the standard of care," Dr. Kang says. "This procedure is safe, quick, very effective, virtually painless and requires minimal recovery time. There is no large incision, so there is no scarring."

Before performing the procedure, Dr. Kang personally performs a careful and accurate ultrasound evaluation to make sure that a patient is a candidate for the procedure. This is not common—in most practices the procedure is done using vein mapping performed by technologists.

The Gwinnett Medical Center-Duluth staff want to make sure that patients receive the most up-to-date information about varicose veins. With treatments such as sclerotherapy and VenaCure EVLT, easing the discomfort and unsightliness of varicose veins is easier, quicker and better than ever. 

Do You Have Varicose Veins?

Factors that contribute to varicose veins include:

- Genetics
- Obesity
- Multiple pregnancies
- Trauma
- Standing for long periods

Symptoms of varicose veins include:

- Leg heaviness and fatigue
- Swollen limbs
- Skin changes
- Skin ulcers



GMC specialists can ease the discomfort and unsightliness of varicose veins, often without surgery (two cases shown here).

CALL

Discover Treatment Options at GMC

Spider veins and varicose veins are becoming easier to treat, and treatment options are becoming more precise and less invasive. There is no need to worry about unsightly, uncomfortable veins any longer. To learn more about vein treatments at Gwinnett Medical Center-Duluth, call **678-312-5000**.

