

Meet Your Physician

Comprehensive Treatment of

What are the Risks of the Procedures?

Blood clots in the deep venous system can occur rarely—0.1-0.02% of patients. This risk is minimized by the administration of a blood thinner before surgery. Sclerotherapy (injection treatments) sometimes causes skin breakdown or pigmentation, but these complications are less common with the new solutions. The Sotradecol solution is mixed with foam to lessen the skin complications but can sometimes cause a visual aura or dizziness that is short-lasting. The newer treatments result in less complications than previous methods of treatment.

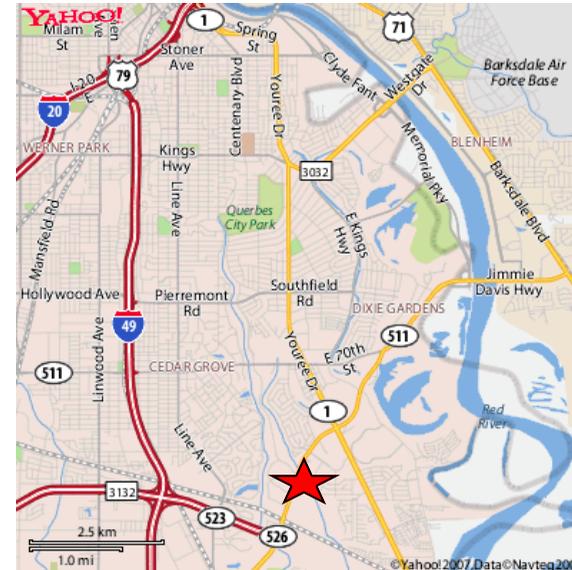
Does Insurance Cover the Treatments?

Almost all insurance companies (including Medicare) cover laser endovenous ablation of the saphenous vein. Often, predetermination by the insurance companies is required. Spider vein treatments are considered cosmetic procedures and are rarely covered. The consultation and venous ultrasound are usually covered by insurance.

Dr. Knight graduated summa cum laude from Vanderbilt University and received the Justin Potter Medical Scholarship to Vanderbilt University Medical School. He received his general and vascular surgery training at the Mayo Clinic where he was awarded the Howard Gray Travel Award (Best Surgery Resident) in 1982 and the Surgery Resident Teacher of the Year in 1983 and 1984. Dr. Knight is certified by the American Board of Surgery in both general and vascular surgery. He has served as President of the Louisiana Chapter of the American College of Surgeons in 1999, the Surgical Association of Louisiana in 2002, and the Shreveport Medical Society in 2004. Currently, he is one of two governors from Louisiana to the American College of Surgeons.



Dr. Knight and his staff provide individual care to every patient they encounter. Patient visits are by appointment. He is a provider for most insurance plans.



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VARICOSE VEINS AND SPIDER VEINS



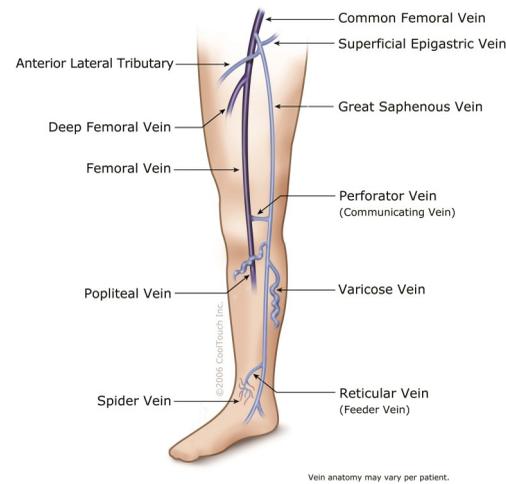
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SUPERFICIAL VENOUS DISEASE

What are Varicose Veins?

The saphenous vein is the major superficial vein of the leg that runs along the inner part of the leg from the ankle to the groin. In many people, the one-way valves in the saphenous vein become incompetent. This leads to increased pressure in the superficial venous system causing vein branches to dilate. These dilated, rope-like veins are called varicose veins. They are often one-fourth inch or larger in diameter. These blue, bulging veins lie just beneath the skin.



What are Spider Veins?

Spider veins are tiny veins that are either blue or red in color and are closer to the skin surface than varicose veins. They often look like tree branches or spider webs and are often unsightly to the patient.

Do Varicose/Spider Veins Cause Symptoms?

Moderate to large varicose veins often cause an aching or burning discomfort particularly after periods of standing. Sometimes blood clots form within the varicose veins, a condition called thrombophlebitis. This causes more significant pain, and swelling can occur. As varicose veins become more severe, hardness of the skin can occur from scarring and often a dark pigment stains the skin. On occasion, ulcers can form in the lower legs. Less commonly, a varicose vein may erode the skin resulting in bleeding. Some patients develop a rash that causes itching which can be quite bothersome.

Occasionally, large spider veins can cause some discomfort, but most of the time they are asymptomatic. Most patients are more concerned about the appearance of spider veins than symptoms.



What Treatment is Available for Varicose Veins?

In some patients, support stockings or compression hose are beneficial at controlling symptoms of varicose veins. In warmer climates, however, patients have a difficult time wearing compression hose on a daily basis.

Surgical therapy for varicose veins has been performed for many years. Because varicose veins are usually caused by incompetent valves in the saphenous veins, saphenous vein "stripping" was the surgical procedure of choice for many years. The failure rate of this procedure is as high as 20% in many series resulting in recurrent varicose veins. As the name implies, vein "stripping" is a traumatic procedure that results in significant scarring, bruising, and postoperative pain.

In recent years, techniques have been developed to close the saphenous vein to avoid "stripping." This new treatment is called endovenous ablation of the saphenous vein, and the most successful technology involves the use of laser energy. This new treatment of endovenous saphenous vein ablation coupled with removal of the varicose veins through tiny puncture wounds (micro-phlebectomy) or by injection with new solutions (sclerotherapy) has been a remarkable advancement in treatment of superficial venous disease. Varicose vein disease can be treated without making a surgical incision!

How are Spider Veins Treated?

Spider veins are best treated with injections of solutions that obliterate the lumen of the vein. The spider veins are accessed with a tiny needle and two new solutions, foamed Sotradecol and glycerin, are injected. These new solutions have resulted in much improvement in spider vein treatment with fewer skin complications. Although laser was initially touted as a treatment for spiders, sclerotherapy has yielded much better results.

What are the Advantages of the New Procedure?

Endovenous saphenous vein ablation using the laser is a less traumatic procedure than vein stripping, resulting in less pain and bruising. Using the micro-phlebectomy technique to remove the varicose veins utilizes tiny stab wounds, minimizing scarring. Patients often return to work in two or three days.

Are the Procedures Painful?

Endovenous saphenous vein laser ablation is performed using local anesthesia and intravenous sedation. Most patients experience minimal pain during the procedure. Postoperative discomfort is often controlled with non-narcotic medication and rarely lasts longer than one to two weeks.