

Information about injection treatment for varicose veins

What is injection treatment?

Injection treatment is used to close varicose veins by injecting a chemical substance into the vein which causes their walls to glue together and the veins to shrivel up. Although it does not work very well if there are faulty valves in the groin, behind the knee and in the long or short saphenous veins, once these have been dealt with by EVLT injection treatment will usually get rid of any veins that do not disappear or shrink following the laser treatment.

What happens during injection treatment?

Injection treatment is done as an outpatient using a very tiny needle that causes little discomfort. Each injected area will be covered with a pad, and a bandage will be then be applied to the leg, often all the way up from the foot. This puts some pressure on the veins that have been injected until the walls of the vein have 'glued' together.

What should I do after injection treatment?

- You should walk briskly for at least 20 minutes after having your injections
- The bandages must be worn continuously for 1 week unless otherwise specified. You should not get the bandage wet.
- Remain as active as you can. Avoid standing still for long periods: if you need to stay standing for more than about half an hour go for a short walk to keep the legs moving. There are no restrictions on your activities and you can return to work immediately after the treatment. It is reasonable to pursue most sports, but avoid very strenuous activities that cause the bandages to loosen.

What other effects or problems might there be?

- The chemical substance can cause inflammation resulting in redness and discomfort. This will settle but if it is troublesome diclofenac or paracetamol will help. Most patients do not require any painkillers.
- Mild ankle swelling may occur with prolonged standing. It will usually settle if you go for a walk or if you elevate your leg.
- Deep vein thrombosis is a possible consequence of injecting the varicose veins, but is extremely rare
- Occasionally (less than 5% of patients) injections can produce brown staining of the skin in the areas where the veins were. It is not possible to predict the patients in whom it will happen. Although the brown staining may gradually fade it can be permanent. It is also possible that a tiny ulcer may develop at the site of injection. Although this will heal it may leave a small scar. Very rarely, blishes of tiny veins can appear in the skin over areas that have been injected (this can also occur after operation).