

During Treatment

When you have your operation, you can expect an incision, approximately 0.5 to 1.5cm long, over the site(s) of leaking valves. These are generally at each groin and less frequently behind the knee. The incisions for the varicose veins themselves will be approximately 1/2 to 2 mm in length and will be closed by a single suture or adhesive tape. Most extraction sites are small punctures (less than 1 mm) and will not require closure.

- Firm compression bandages are applied at completion of surgery.
- Post operatively you will be confined to bed for 4-6 hours with the legs elevated.
- Skin closure adhesive tapes and soluble buried sutures are used so no suture removal is required after surgery.

After Treatment

You can expect some mild stinging discomfort for a few hours, which should be easily controlled by oral analgesia (pain tablets e.g. Paracetamol or Codeine).

Tight bandages causing severe pain or inability to sleep should be reported to the nursing staff.

Sometimes blood thinning injections are used as a precaution against thrombosis, but most medication is in tablet form only.

Ongoing recovery

The hospital time for surgery is in the range of one to three days, depending on comfort.

A post op appointment will be scheduled for you. A change from bandages to compression stockings takes place on the second or third day after surgery.

Swelling is controlled with bandages and stockings. These can be used for extended periods if desired. One week is the usual time for stockings. If bleeding occurs through the bandages please contact the rooms. Following your second post op appointment there is no need to elevate your feet in bed.

Scars after surgery are initially red as they heal. This redness fades after 6 weeks to 18 months depending on the individual. The puncture site scars have the appearance of mosquito bites during this time. Occasionally a thread of fibre is seen at these sites and can be cut off with nail scissors.

Bruising of the legs/thighs can occur and are sometimes lumpy. These problems resolve over one to six weeks. Most thigh discomfort settles after 10 days. If any bruising, swelling or lumps alarm you then contact the office.

Restrictions following surgery

You may drive, walk or do most chores in the light stockings from 2 days post surgery. Activity is encouraged and walking is the best activity to look after your body at this time. When you are not active you will find it more comfortable to put your legs up. Standing it not harmful.

Information on Surgery for Varicose Veins

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Surgical treatment for varicose veins...

What Varicose Veins are Suitable for surgery?

Recurrent varicose veins and lumpy surface veins on the lower limbs are still best managed through surgical intervention. Some veins may be treated using surgery or laser and a decision is made on an individual basis.

Although there have been many technological developments in the management of varicose veins, for some veins surgery remains the best possible treatment option. During surgery the varicose veins will be extracted from the legs through a series of small incisions. A vascular ultrasound assessment will be done prior to surgery to identify the points of valve failure to minimise the risk of a vein being overlooked.

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What are possible Side Effects?

- Numb patches
- Bruising
- Minor infection
- Inflammation
- Lumps or solid segments of vein causing discomfort.

Disabling pain lasting more than 2 weeks is uncommon and should be reported.

Advantages of Surgery?

- No restrictions post surgery
- Resumption of normal activity from day 2 post surgery
- Less discomfort from inflammation than laser
- Staining is much less prominent than with laser treatment

Prior to Treatment

Prior to the operation you will be seen by both the Anaesthetist and Mr. Milne. The Anaesthetist will discuss your needs and answer any questions you may have.

Please bring any regular medication with you to hospital.

Mr Milne will mark your legs with red ink at this visit and any questions about your surgery can be answered. An Assistant Surgeon is employed on all occasions for venous surgery and will be introduced to you prior to anaesthesia.

