



## Endovenous Laser Ablation (EVLA) Informed Consent

Endovenous Laser Ablation (EVLA) are minimally invasive options for treating large unhealthy veins of the leg. The first step involves a local numbing of the leg and then an insertion of an IV catheter into the unhealthy vein. A laser is then inserted into the catheter and advanced up into the unhealthy vein. Your vein will then be anesthetized with a local anesthetic agent. During the second stage of the treatment, the vein will be closed by the use of thermal ablation which destroys that portion of the diseased vein. This will relieve the backflow pressure, which is causing your varicose vein(s). Following the procedure, you will wear a compression stocking. We encourage you to wear your compression stockings daily for the next 7 days. You can certainly wear the stockings longer than 7 days, if you feel it helps your swelling or pain. The compression stockings are to be taken off at night. You may also discontinue wearing the stockings if they are causing significant pain or are a burden. Compression stockings are to be helpful, not harmful.

At 7 to 10 days following EVLA procedure(s) and again at 6 weeks after EVLA procedure(s), we will evaluate your results using ultrasound. Varicose Veins and Spider Veins are chronic and recurrent conditions. The variety of treatments available will not offer a cure, but rather a control of the condition. Surgically removed veins cannot come back, veins that are sclerosed will not return. However, your tendency towards developing other varicose veins will not be relieved by this or any other form of treatment. In very rare cases, a patient may experience one of the following side effects. It is our obligation to inform the patient of such risks.

### Potential Risks and Side Effects

All surgical interventions carry an inherent risk of infection, allergic reaction, bleeding and anesthetic complications including cardiopulmonary complications. Below are possible risks and side effects that may occur with Endo Venous Laser Ablation.

**Allergic reaction:** Very rarely, a patient may have an allergic reaction to the anesthetic agent. The risk of this is greater in patients who have a history of allergies.

**Pain:** Patients may experience moderate to severe pain following the procedure. The leg may be red and tender to the touch after treatment, and an uncomfortable sensation may run along the vein route. This discomfort is usually temporary.

**Swelling:** This may occur after treating veins in the leg. It usually resolves in a few days but may last a few weeks, especially after treatment of large varicose veins. Wearing the prescribed compression stocking lessens ankle swelling.

**Skin Burns:** Utilizing laser therapy carries a risk of skin burns, which may require further surgical treatment.

**Deep Vein Thrombosis (blood clot):** is a very rare complication, the dangers of phlebitis include the possibility of pulmonary embolus (a blood clot carried to the lungs) and post phlebotic syndrome, resulting in a permanent swelling or inflammation of the leg.

**Transient hyperpigmentation:** Patients who have had **Endovenous Laser Ablation** may notice some discoloration after treatment. This discoloration is almost always transient and will resolve in about several months. In rare cases this darkening of the skin may persist up to a year.

**Nodularity:** Nodularity at the site of vein removal may persist for up to a year. This occurs when there are pieces of the vein that remain in the body and have scarred down and become hard, like a scab. Sometimes, you may be able to feel this hardened scab in your leg. With time, the body will absorb and soften these areas but some may persist.

**Nerve trauma:** Occasionally there can be trauma to surrounding nerves, which can result in a transient numbness that will resolve on its own with time. In rare instances the localized numbness may be permanent.

**Development of other varicose veins:** When a patient has varicose veins it is usually an ongoing problem. Several years after the vein has been treated, the body will attempt to repair itself by taking veins that were insignificant and make them significant. In the future, there may be a need for additional treatment of other veins that have developed venous insufficiency.

I am aware that in addition to risks listed above, there are other risks that may accompany any surgical procedure, such as loss of blood, infection, and inflammation in the venous system with formation of a thrombus (clot), postoperative bleeding, and nerve trauma that may lead to temporary or permanent numbness.

**Alternative Treatments:** Because varicose veins are not life-threatening conditions, surgical treatment is not mandatory in every patient. Some patients get adequate relief of symptoms from wearing graduated compression stockings. Surgical stripping may also be used to treat large varicose veins. This usually requires a hospital stay and usually is performed while the patient is under general anesthesia. Risks of vein stripping are similar with the additional risk of the general anesthetic. The other option is to receive no treatment at all.



## Endovenous Laser Ablation (EVLA) Pre and Post-Operative Instructions

An oral relaxation medication should be requested if you tend to get nervous before having a procedure performed. Most patients report the discomfort of the procedure as very mild. Please let us know if you want such a medication so we can call it out to your local pharmacy. The medication should be taken approximately 1 hour prior to your surgery time. If you use such a medication, you will need to arrange for someone to drive you home after the procedure. They may accompany you in the room during the procedure, wait in the waiting area or leave and run an errand. Anticipate 60 minutes for your vein treatment.

- Please eat a small snack or normal meal 30 - 60 min prior to coming for your procedure.
- **We recommend wearing loose fitting old shorts as a germicidal cleanser may get on them during the procedure.**

Most people return to work the following day. If you need a note / excuse for this, please let us know and we will be happy to provide this to you.

### Endovenous Laser Ablation Post-Op Instructions

You will have a wrap and a padded dressing overlying your treated vein following the procedure. **Before going to bed that night, we recommend removing the wrap and showering to remove remaining iodine and Hibiclens from the procedure. The wrap can be removed sooner if it is uncomfortable.**

Do not use a bandage on the injection site. The wrap we provide will act as your bandage. Since the skin has been cleansed of its natural oils and bacteria before the procedure, bandages may cause irritation or blistering.

**We encourage you to wear your compression stockings daily for the next 7 days.** You can certainly wear the stockings longer than 7 days if you feel it helps your swelling or pain. The compression stockings are to be taken off at night. You may also discontinue wearing the stockings if they are causing significant pain or are a burden. Compression stockings are to be helpful, not harmful.

**Walking two times a day for 10-15 minutes is important,** even on the day of your procedure. Shorter and more frequent walking can be performed if these longer walks are not feasible. Walking promotes speedy healing. It is important for you to continue to move and maintain a normal level of activity. **You may return to more aggressive activities in a gradual fashion as your level of discomfort permits.**

You may take over-the-counter pain relievers (ex: Tylenol or ibuprofen). Your provider may also prescribe an oral steroid for inflammation. Heat or ice packs may also be beneficial in reducing pain.

You may shower, but do not submerge the injection site in water for 24 hours. This means no baths, swimming pools, lakes, or hot tubs; and we recommend avoiding extreme heat like saunas during this time.

**We recommend avoiding extensive travel for 2 weeks. If it is necessary for you to travel within the 2 weeks after a vein procedure, you will need to walk 10 minutes every 2 hours along the way and ALWAYS wear your compression stockings when traveling.**

Occasionally, numbness or tingling may develop in areas of the lower leg but this usually will resolve in several weeks to several months.

Post-operative Duplex Scans are needed to ensure that the deep veins do not develop a blood clot. Please keep these appointments.

**REMEMBER: Always bring your compression stockings and shorts to your appointments.**

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### POTENTIAL SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS FROM VEIN TREATMENTS THAT MAY REQUIRE EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION

\*Shortness of breath   \*Chest pain   \*Rapid heart rate   \*Severe leg pain and / or swelling of the entire leg or calf

**PLEASE SEEK IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ROOM CARE**