



Endovenous Foam Sclerotherapy (EFS) Fact Sheet

What is Endovenous Foam Sclerotherapy (EFS)?

Sclerotherapy is a non-surgical technique using medication injected into a vein to eliminate varicose veins/spider veins. The medication is mixed with air to create foam.

Is the procedure safe?

In skilled hands, the procedure is a safe and effective treatment for varicose veins/spider veins. As with any procedure, there are a number of complications associated with EFS. Common complications are mild post-procedure pain and discomfort and transient hyperpigmentation over the treated vein. More serious complications, which are rare, include allergic reactions to the chemical agent, skin ulceration, development of blood clots, trapped blood in the treated vein and transient neurologic symptoms (headache, visual changes, and TIA/stroke).

Is the procedure expensive? Is this procedure covered by insurance?

Compared to other procedures for treatment of varicose veins/spider veins, EFS is more cost-effective with less down time from work. Some insurance companies cover EFS for treatment of varicose veins if medically necessary rather than for cosmetic reasons. However, some insurance companies view this procedure as a cosmetic procedure and will not cover the cost. Most insurance companies will require three months of conservative treatment prior to approval of the procedure.

Will the results be immediate?

In some cases, improvement is immediately noticeable. However, complete resolution of the treated area and associated symptoms may take up to several months. Some patients may require multiple treatments.

Is the procedure guaranteed?

The overall success rate of EFS is approximately 70%-80% with the majority of patients obtaining complete, or near complete, resolution of symptoms. The overall success rate of EFS is comparable to other non-surgical techniques (radiofrequency ablation, laser therapy).

Is the procedure painful?

Patients generally report mild to moderate pain immediately after and up to a week after the procedure due to inflammation of the vein in response to the chemical agent injected. In addition, blood can get trapped within the vein which can cause discomfort in that region. Should this occur, the blood can be withdrawn using a needle, providing immediate relief.

What kind of documentation is necessary?

Photographs of the legs will be obtained before and after the procedure to evaluate success of the procedure. Ultrasound examination of the leg is performed before and after the procedure to ensure absence of blood clot as well as evaluating success of the procedure.

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