

Varicose Vein



Normal veins are blood vessels that conduct blood back to the heart. In the leg it is uphill all the way and the veins have valves in them to ensure the proper direction of flow. Varicose veins are tortuous dilated abnormal leg veins, which do not drain blood back to the heart properly.

The operation prevents the flow into the abnormal veins at either the top of the leg behind the knee or elsewhere by "ligation". Dilated unsightly veins are all then removed by a technique known as "stripping" or "phlebectomy". Only a few veins are removed, the normal veins at present are working overtime to conduct the blood back to the heart from the leg since the varicose veins, far from draining, are actually causing blood flow back down through the system towards the foot. The normal venous system will be greatly relieved by stopping this reflux flow.

Every effort will be made to make your waiting time before surgery as brief as possible. However, delays are sometimes unavoidable due to unforeseen circumstances e.g. emergency surgery. The Day Surgery Unit staff will inform you of any delays as soon as possible.

What to expect after your operation

You will be awakened in the theatre recovery area where the staff will check your blood pressure and pulse before returning you to the Day Surgery Unit to complete your recovery.

Some pain or discomfort after your operation is quite normal, and you will be given painkilling tablets for this. Your leg(s) may be elevated by pillows.

After surgery you will be allowed to rest for a few hours and assuming there are no complications you will be allowed home the same day. If for any reason you are requiring to stay in hospital overnight following your operation, a bed will be made available for you and we will inform your relatives at your request.

Once you are home

It is advisable to rest for 24-48 hours after discharge, as you may not feel up to doing very much. Take the painkillers you have been given, and always following the instructions on the pack.

Your bandages will be removed and a lighter support applied by the district nurse who will call to see you at home. This visit will have been arranged in the Ward prior to discharge.

Stitches or clips will be removed in 7-10 days, an appointment will be made for your either at the Hospital or at your own General Practitioners for this to be done.

Until then rest your legs up (higher than your bottom) and go for short walks indoors. Do not stand or sit with your knees bent for long periods (e.g. car journeys). You can then walk as far as you like and consider returning to work if you are comfortable.

Follow up

You will receive a letter for your GP and a follow-up appointment if required prior to discharge.

If you require any **further advice or information**, please contact the nursing staff at DAY SURGERY UNIT Telephone **01324 567537**.

If you have any **urgent concerns or emergencies**, please contact your GP, NHS 24 or present at the Emergency Department (A&E) Forth Valley Royal Hospital, Larbert.

We are happy to consider requests for this publication in other languages or formats such as large print. Please call 01324 590886 (24hrs), fax 01324 590867 or email FV-UHB.disabilitydepartment@nhs.net

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