

Foam Sclerotherapy

Foam sclerotherapy is a treatment which involves mixing air with a solution (Polidocanol) and injecting it directly into your problematic veins. This foam solution damages the lining resulting in intense inflammation and closure of your vein. Over the next several weeks, your veins will clot and be absorbed by the body causing them to fade.

How is Foam Sclerotherapy Performed?

Your legs will be cleansed with an alcohol solution. Using very fine, small needles the doctor injects the foam solution directly into your problematic vessels. The number of veins injected in one session varies, depending on the size and location of the veins. After the injections are completed, compression dressings and stockings are applied. The procedure takes about 45 minutes. Bruising is common after injections are performed and most patient's legs will look "worse before better."

Risks

The potential side effects of foam sclerotherapy include, but are not limited to:

- Transient hyperpigmentation: Approximately 20% of patients who undergo foam sclerotherapy notice a discoloration (light-brown streaks) after treatment. This usually fades in 4 to 12 months. In rare instances this darkening of the skin may persist for years.
- Temporary tiny blood vessels may develop at the treated area. This is called revascularization, "flares," "mats," or "blushing." They may appear days or weeks after the procedure but should fade within a few months and usually do not require further treatment.
- Allergic reaction
- Most common side effects:
 - The veins may become firm and tender to the touch after treatment, and an uncomfortable sensation may run along the vein route. This discomfort is usually temporary.
 - Bruising is very common and to be expected.
 - Some patients complain of an itchy sensation after treatment, which is also very normal.
 - Trapped blood may cause a discoloration, which can be flushed out, although this can leave discoloration (bronzing) up to one year.

Other side effects rarely develop after foam sclerotherapy. If you have any of these rare side effects, please contact The Vascular Institute immediately:

- Sudden onset of a swollen leg. This could be the sign of a deep vein thrombosis (DVT) which is a very rare complication. The dangers of DVT include the possibility of pulmonary embolism (a

blood clot carried to the lungs) and postphlebitic syndrome, resulting in a permanent swelling of the leg.

- Skin ulceration associated with foam sclerotherapy is a very rare complication. A blister may form, open, and become ulcerated. Healing occurs slowly over a few months. After healing, this will usually leave a scar.

Before the Treatment

- Well-fitting compression stockings are an important part of the post injection care and should be brought to your appointment. Compression stockings can be purchased at The Vascular Institute, local medical supply stores, or online. Best brands of compression stockings to purchase are: Medi, Sigvaris, Juzo, or Jobst. Places to purchase compression stockings:
 - The Vascular Institute by Teton Radiology, 2001 S Woodruff, Suite 16, Idaho Falls
 - Norco Medical, 3908 Washington Parkway, Idaho Falls
 - Norco Medical, 146 N 2nd East, Rexburg
 - Eagle Rock Oxygen, 2425 Channing Way, Idaho Falls
 - Online: discountsurgical.com
- Women should always inform their physician and nurse if there is any possibility that they are pregnant
- The nurse or radiologist will review the risks and benefits of the treatment and answer any questions you may have.

Aftercare Instructions

- A 3-week follow up appointment will be scheduled before you leave.
- After the treatment you will be able to drive home. You may resume regular activities and are encouraged to walk.
- We recommend that you **wear the compression dressing and compression stockings for 24 hours, day and night**. After the initial 24-hour period, you can remove the pressure dressing and **wear compression stockings for 3 days taking them off at night**. You may find it beneficial to continue to wear the compression stockings during the daytime after the initial 3 days as healing can take up to 6 weeks. Compression stockings can never be worn too much.
- You may experience slight discomfort such as aching or throbbing for the first 1-2 weeks after the treatment. Walking will help dissipate this sensation. If discomfort continues, Ibuprofen may be taken with food.
- Significant bruising may occur. This is a normal process and you should not be alarmed. The vessels may appear to turn dark in color and/or be

slightly tender and firm to the touch. This could be an entrapment of blood in the closed vessels which is a normal response to the procedure, and will be evacuated at the time of your next treatment session. If this area of entrapped blood becomes very tender before your next appointment, please call The Vascular Institute.

- Exercise is an important part of the healing process. A 20-minute walk or bike ride once or twice a day is best for the healing process. If you are already involved in an exercise program, you are encouraged to continue. The only exercises to avoid are leg exercises with weights and high impact aerobics. These activities should be avoided for 7 days.
- Sun exposure is NOT recommended for 10 days after your treatment. Sunburn on areas that have recently been treated could result in skin damage.
- Hot tubs, saunas and long hot baths are not recommended for 1 week following treatment, as the warmth causes the veins to dilate.

Call The Vascular Institute at 208-535-5959 or after hours at 208-390-2457 with any questions about the treatment or how your legs are feeling.