



GUIDELINES FOR VARICOSE VEINS – PRE AND POST OPERATIVE CARE

Before Operation –

Please shave your legs and groins the day prior to the operation, which will facilitate surgery and minimise infection. Prior to the surgery your legs will be marked with a texta by the surgeon. **It is also important not to use moisturiser on your legs the day of surgery.**

After Operation –

When you return from the operating theatre your legs will be bandaged from the toes to the groins and there will be a dressing on the groin wound. These bandages are usually removed before you go home from the hospital, one or two days after the operation. It is normal at that time to have a shower, dry your legs off and you are then fitted with elastic stockings.

These stockings are tight and sometimes difficult to put on, and it is advisable to take a pair of pantihose with you to hospital. The pantihose can then be applied to the leg and a generous application of powder put on the pantihose prior to putting on the elastic stocking, which then goes on easily.

It is normal to wear the elastic stockings during the daytime until you go to bed at night. There is no need to wear an elastic stocking at night which gives you the opportunity to wash the stocking and get it dry before morning. The stockings are worn during the daytime **only** for a period of **four weeks**.

When your dressings are removed you may also note considerable bruising and lumpiness under the bruised areas. **Do not be concerned.** This is quite normal and will disappear over a period of several weeks however the lumpiness can remain for a couple more weeks. The bruising occurs because of the removal of veins that lie just under the skin and also due to the blood 'thinning' agent that is given in order to prevent any dangerous clots from forming in the legs. The bruising, local swelling and pain are normal after this procedure and the bruising can occur the same or following day. You may experience some cramping with this bruising which is usually mild and responds well to over-the-counter medications like Nurofen and/or the local application of an ointment called Hirudoid.

During the day you will be encouraged to walk about, but when you are tired it is best to sit down and elevate the feet. You should aim to walk at least one (1) kilometre each morning and afternoon. It is not wise to stand in one position for any longer than ten minutes for the first two or three weeks. Each day, once you go home, it is best to have your shower early, put on your elastic stockings and leave them on for the remainder of the day. The stockings will support the bruising that is inevitably present and they tend to stop swelling, and **need to be worn for four weeks after surgery.**