



# SKIN INSTITUTE

## Varicose Vein Surgery Information Sheet

Varicose veins can be treated by removal (vein stripping). Removing or treating varicose veins does not cause circulation problems because the blood flow will divert to healthy veins.

Varicose vein surgery is routinely performed under General Anaesthetic. Surgery is usually done as a day stay case.

The most common varicose vein operation is called ligation and stripping. It involves a small cut in the groin at the top end of the affected vein. This vein is tied off (ligated), to stop blood flowing through it, and then is carefully pulled (stripped) out of the leg through the incision. Small cuts may also be made along the legs to allow smaller individual veins to be removed (avulsed).

The legs may feel tender for a few days. Paracetamol taken as directed should help to relieve any discomfort. Anyone who has a General Anaesthetic will need to arrange for someone to drive him or her home and stay with him or her for the first 24 hours after surgery.

**Complications are rare, however call your Surgeon immediately if you experience:**

- Deep Vein thrombosis – a clot in the deep veins of the legs.  
***Symptoms - pain in the calf, swelling, redness and heat.***
- Pulmonary embolus – a blood clot travels in the blood stream to the lungs. ***Symptoms - chest discomfort and shortness of breath.***

## **Side Effects**

- Tenderness – usually controlled with painkillers
- Bruising – should fade within a few weeks
- A small amount of bleeding from the wounds
- Scarring at incision site
- Nerve damage – temporary, lasting a few weeks/months
- Pulmonary embolus (rare)
- Deep vein thrombosis (rare)

*Reviewed: February 2016*