

Fact Sheet

Thread Veins & Vascular Lesions Laser and / or Microsclerotherapy

Please read this leaflet carefully this forms the basis of your consent for treatment. If there is anything you do not understand or are concerned about please raise this during your consultation.

What are thread veins?

Thread veins, broken veins or telangectasia are the small red or blue veins which can appear at various sites on the body. They can appear as single veins, either widely dispersed or as a collection of broken veins close together. They can also appear as a collection of blood vessels arising from a single point; these are known as Spider Naevi.

How can they be treated?

There are currently two main methods available to treat thread veins – laser treatment and microsclerotherapy (the injection of a sclerosing agent into the veins). At Laserase we can offer either treatment or a combination of these therapies in order to achieve the best results.

Why do thread veins develop?

Thread veins are caused by a variety of factors including exposure to ultra violet light, wind and extremes of temperature. Steroid creams and the hormonal changes that occur during pregnancy can also induce them. For genetic reasons some individuals are more prone to develop thread veins than others and some people are more at risk because of old injuries or because they have occupations where they stand for long periods. It is possible that hormone treatments, such as the contraceptive pill and HRT can increase the likelihood of forming thread veins.

Can all thread veins be removed?

By combining both laser and microsclerotherapy treatments, we are able to maximise our ability to clear thread veins. However, some very large veins may be resistant to either treatment and may not respond; you will be advised in advance during consultation about any likely problems. As with all medical treatments it is possible that not everyone will respond to treatment. Some patients may obtain a less than average response or may not respond at all.

How does laser therapy work?

Lasers produce light of a very specific wavelength. The wavelength is matched to a target colour (such as the red of blood or the vessel wall). The laser light is absorbed by the target but not the surrounding tissue. The heat energy from the laser pulses breaks down the thread veins into tiny particles. These particles are then dispersed naturally in the body and therefore the veins fade or disappear over several weeks.

Which laser will be used?

We use a long pulsed ND:Yag laser - which is very efficient at removing blood vessels up to a diameter of about 2mm.

What is laser treatment like?

The laser is fired in short bursts at the thread veins. This feels like a hot pin-prick on the skin and some patients may find this a little uncomfortable. During treatment the target area will be cooled in order to reduce sensation. Following treatment aloe vera/Vaseline will be applied to reduce risk of blistering.

What can I expect after laser treatment?

Immediately after treatment the majority of treated veins are likely to be more visible. In the case of thicker veins there may be some skin reaction in the form of slight blistering, or light crusting. This usually subsides within a few days. Fine facial veins can sometimes disappear at the time of treatment, although this cannot be guaranteed. Any discoloration/bruising usually fades after 7-14 days.

How many treatments will I need and how often?

The number of treatments required will depend upon the site and the extent of the affected area. It will be estimated at your consultation. Treatments are usually planned at 6 – 8 week intervals for laser treatments and 12 weeks for microsclerotherapy. As with all medical treatments it is possible that not everyone will respond to treatment. Some patients may obtain a less than average response or may not respond at all.

What are the possible complications of laser therapy?

Fact Sheet

Thread Veins & Vascular Lesions Laser and / or Microsclerotherapy

In general laser therapy is safe and effective. Whilst complications do sometimes occur, the risk of scarring is very low. Complications may include: blistering, fine crusting, particularly on very fine vessels, scarring, ulceration, loss of skin pigment or increased pigmentation. Whilst we have never experienced any long lasting complications we cannot guarantee that they would not be permanent. The area around the ankle is more likely to have complications than other areas. It is very important that you give details of any medication you are taking and any medical problems you have, which may be relevant to the treatment. We do not recommend treatment in patients who are heavily tanned.

Are all thread veins suitable for laser therapy?

Not all thread veins respond to laser therapy, as they may be too large or situated too deeply within the skin for the laser to penetrate. In these cases, microsclerotherapy may be more effective.

Treatment by Microsclerotherapy

What is microsclerotherapy?

Microsclerotherapy involves the introduction of an extremely fine needle into the vein to be treated. The vein is then filled with a sclerosing liquid, which causes microscopic damage to the cells lining the vein. The body responds to this damage causing the vessel to shrink and eventually to be obliterated.

What does it feel like?

The sclerosing agent is used in tiny amounts and causes minimal discomfort, like a tiny pin prick. It is much less painful than other injections or blood tests.

What happens after microsclerotherapy?

For a day or two after treatment the injection sites look rather like insect bites, but these subside quickly. Tiny scabs may form at the injection site and the treated area will appear bruised. The bruising may last for 2-3 weeks. After 8 – 12 weeks remaining veins can be re-injected to reduce them further.

What are the possible complications of microsclerotherapy?

Complications of microsclerotherapy are rare but can occur. Following treatment some patients develop brown discoloration of the skin, which is due to the deposition of an iron-containing pigment (haemosiderin) in the skin. This pigment may take a long time to fade away or, in very rare cases, can even be permanent. Other much rarer complications include, allergic reactions to the sclerosing solution, inflammation and skin injury, which may lead to the development of a small ulcer and permanent scar. The area around the ankle is more likely to have complications than other areas. For the above reasons pregnant or breast feeding ladies will be asked to postpone treatment and patients taking certain medications (such as anticoagulants) will be advised against microsclerotherapy. All clients are given a comprehensive medical evaluation and post treatment advice to minimise any risk of complications. As with all medical treatments it is possible that not everyone will respond to treatment. Some patients may obtain a less than average response or may not respond at all.

What can I do after treatment?

After both laser therapy and microsclerotherapy it is quite safe to perform all daily activities and exercise is encouraged, with the exception of swimming which should be avoided until the skin is completely healed. If the treated area is a little sore or dry then the application of aloe vera gel may help. You may be advised to wear compression tights after treatment – your practitioner will advise you at consultation.

Will I have laser treatment or microsclerotherapy?

Whether you have treatment by laser or microsclerotherapy is usually dictated by the size of the veins and where they are on the body. The initial assessment will allow the doctor or nurse to inspect the treatment site and select the appropriate treatment.

How much will it cost?

The cost of the treatment is dependent upon the area treated; whilst an approximate cost may be given the actual cost will be detailed within the consultation appointment.

Fact Sheet

Thread Veins & Vascular Lesions Laser and / or Microsclerotherapy

A consultation is required before embarking on any treatment regime, test patches are also undertaken.

A parent or guardian must accompany anyone aged under 18.

About the Clinic

Laserase Bolton has been based at Bolton Royal Hospital since 1994. Throughout we have been fully registered with the appropriate governing body, who regularly inspects our clinic. You have the reassurance that your treatment will be conducted by a fully qualified and experienced doctor or nurse. All of our doctors and nurses have extensive training and experience; they are continually updated and assessed on new techniques.

We would be delighted to tell you about any treatments we offer - visit our website: www.laserase-bolton.co.uk

For further information or to book an appointment please contact us:

Telephone: 01204 570900
Email: admin@laserase-bolton.co.uk
Address: Laserase Bolton Ltd, Redgate Way, Farnworth, Bolton, BL4 0JL

*Laserase is registered with the Care Quality Commission
Laserase is a private medical concern.*