

Don't be vain about veins

One of the problems I regularly encounter when dealing with varicose vein problems is ignorance

PATIENTS come to me too long after noticing the veins and that can only add to their difficulties. Some patients deny that their varicose veins are causing any problems but don't realise that symptoms such as leg cramps, tired legs and skin discolouration are caused by the veins and can be relieved by treatment.

In some ways, I can understand this reluctance. There is this myth that varicose vein surgery can put you off work for months and in the current economic climate, that timescale is often not possible or practical.

There is also sometimes a perceived embarrassment factor, especially among men who are just as prone to suffer from varicose veins as women.

However, I am here to tell you the truth and dispel those myths.

Firstly, surgical techniques have advanced to such a stage that you can be back on your feet within hours of having an operation.

Yes, recovery did use to take a lot longer, but those days are gone - at least in my practice.

For instance one popular treatment for problem veins is a local anaesthetic technique called Endovenous Laser Ablation (EVLA).

During this treatment, a laser fibre is inserted directly into the affected vein and the heat generated causes the vein to collapse and seal off. The sealed vein then dissolves during the course of the next few weeks.

Despite the hi-tech and scientific nature of the treatment this is a day-case procedure, which takes about

an hour to complete. In most cases, a patient can go back to work the next day.

What is more, it is not embarrassing, not when one in five of the population suffer from some form of vein problems.

So it doesn't have to be embarrassing, it doesn't have to be costly and it doesn't have to mean a long period off work.

Whether male or female, business leaders from all sectors and all walks of life are just as prone as anyone. It doesn't matter if you are constantly on the move or sitting at a desk for long periods.

Simple steps can help to relieve the symptoms such as elevating legs, wearing compression stockings and forms of exercise such as running, cycling and swimming. However, if you have inherited the tendency to varicose veins such as 20% of the population, then you will develop them at some stage in your life.

Whatever happens, please don't ignore the warning signs.

More information is available from www.michaelgaunt.com or by calling 01223 305858

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