Patient Information microsclerotherapy

What is microsclerotherapy?
Thread, spider or red thread veins of the legs are a common problem which mostly affects women. These small veins can form anywhere on the leg from the top of the thigh to the ankle. While these veins pose no major health problems, they can be unsightly. Microsclerotherapy is a procedure whereby a small amount of an irritant solution is injected into the thread veins in order to get rid of them. It is 60-80% effective and results cannot be guaranteed.

What causes thread veins?
The reason why some people are affected and others are not is unknown. There are though some predisposing factors. Heredity seems to play a part. Injury to the legs and long periods of standing are causative factors. In addition, more women than men seem to develop this condition as a result of pregnancy or hormones.

How does it work?
The irritant solution we use is called ......................
It works by irritating the lining of the vein walls. This damage triggers a healing process which over several weeks causes the veins to close and fade away. More than one treatment is generally needed, although most thread veins can be treated over a course of three to four sessions. For very extensive thread veins a maximum of six treatments could be necessary, but rarely more.

What does it involve?
A very fine needle is used to inject the solution. Research has shown that wearing compression hosiery following the procedure can help to optimise the results. Each treatment session can last 30-40 minutes.

Is it painful?
There is a little minor discomfort with a very slight burning sensation or irritation, but this soon disappears. It should not be enough to disturb sleep.

Side effects?
Most patients have no side effects, but some reported ones include:
- Slightly raised areas at the injection sites which heal within a day or two.
- Temporary bruising around the treated areas which usually resolve quite quickly.
- In up to 30% patients small dark areas of pigmentation may occur over the treated thread vein. These will usually resolve in time and may take a year to do so.
- The development of tiny networks of fine red vessels near the injection site of larger vessels may occur and may take time to resolve. They can be treated if they persist.
- Allergic reactions to the solution are rare and easily treated.
- In rare cases blistering may occur which may lead to scarring.
- Very rarely local necrosis or death of tissue in the area may occur.
Is it suitable for me?
This treatment is not suitable for everyone. Your practitioner will take a medical history and discuss the possible risks and complications with you prior to treatment. You may be referred to a vascular surgeon.

Is it safe?
This is a safe treatment but as with any other treatment, not entirely without risk.

Will they come back?
Thread veins may come back. It may seem that a previously injected vein has recurred, whereas in fact a new thread vein has appeared in the same area.

Pre – treatment advice
- Avoid fish oils and evening primrose for a week or two as they can increase bruising.
- If you already have your compression hosiery bring them on the day of treatment

Aftercare microsclerotherapy
You may resume normal activities immediately. The aim of treatment is to encourage the veins to close.
- You will be given compression hosiery to wear during the day for a week or fortnight.
- Take a 10 minute walk immediately after treatment.
- Elevate the legs as much as possible for the first two weeks.
- Preferably shower rather than bathe after the procedure. Avoid rubbing shower gel or soap over the injection sites, but simply splash these areas with water and pat dry.
- Avoid the use of body lotions or creams in the treated areas for the first few days.
- Avoid hot baths, saunas or sunbeds for at least two weeks.
- Avoid waxing or shaving the leg(s) for about four weeks.
- Avoid strenuous activity such as aerobics or keep fit for two weeks.
- Please discuss any long haul or travel plans within four weeks of treatment with your practitioner.
- Avoid sun exposure for about four weeks as pigmentation may take longer to fade.
- The use of compression hose, weight control and exercise may be beneficial in the longer term.
- Cosmetic camouflage make up can be used to improve the appearance of thread veins.

We would like to see you in two to four weeks time for a check-up.

If you have any concerns please telephone .........................