

Information sheet

Avulsions: FAQs

What are avulsions?

Avulsions is the name of the technique for removing lumpy varicose veins that can't be treated by endovenous ablation or traditional surgery alone. Avulsions can be performed under general and local anaesthesia. In some patients, the veins are caused by a broken valve in the middle of the thigh or from within the pelvis. These veins can be treated by avulsions. Avulsions can be the only part of an operation, but are normally done as part of another procedure such as traditional surgery or EVA. The codes used for insurers are L8750 & L8751.

How is an avulsion done?

A small hole about 1mm in diameter is made in the skin and the vein underneath is removed with a special hook until the vein snaps. Another hole is then made further along the vein and more is removed. The whole varicose vein is therefore removed through several small nicks in the skin. They do not need to be stitched. This part of the operation is not very painful. The incisions that Veincare Specialists make are so small that, after a few weeks, it is almost impossible to see where the vein has been treated. This therefore gives a good cosmetic result.

Are there any risks to avulsion surgery?

Apart from the risk of bleeding from the small hole made, some people can develop tender lumps under the skin. These settle with time and are very similar to a blood blister. Some patients (less than 1 in 100) can develop a wound infection. Some small nerves that give feeling to the skin can be damaged so the skin may feel numb to touch. Spider veins can develop at the site of an avulsion and may require sclerotherapy.

Are there any alternatives to avulsions?

Apart from conventional avulsions, the veins can be treated with Varicofoam.

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What happens after the operation?

After your varicose vein surgery with avulsions you have bandages on your leg(s). These can be removed the day after your operation. When the bandages have been removed, you can have a shower but do not soak the wounds. You should have been given either full length stockings or an elasticated bandage (SSB) to wear. Please wear them night and day for a whole week and then during the day for a second week.

What are the stockings for?

After your operation, you will be bruised where the veins have been removed. Most people find that the stockings help reduce any discomfort in the legs. If you find that the stockings are uncomfortable or that they keep slipping down then it is not essential for you to wear them.

What should I do when I get home?

You can do any of the things that you normally do as long as your legs are comfortable. It is not necessary to walk several miles a day, but you should not go to bed as if you were ill. Complete rest can increase the risk of a deep vein thrombosis. Be up and around the house and walk in your garden or the street near your home for the first few days. Gradually increase the amount of exercise you take.

Can I have a bath or shower?

You should treat your wounds carefully, as you would any cut. You can have a shower the day after the operation if you wish. Do not soak the wounds for 5 days as this can increase the risk of infection. It is probably best to have a shower and then pat the wounds gently to dry them. An alternative to drying with a towel could be a hair drier.

When can I drive again?

It is important that you are safe when driving. Do not drive for 24 hours after your operation or whilst you are on any strong pain-killers. You can drive when you can do an emergency stop. It may be best to sit in the car for a while before driving so that you can check that you will be safe and comfortable.

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Do I need any stitches removing?

Avulsions are done through tiny cuts which do not need stitches.

What do I do if I am worried about my leg(s)?

Please see your GP in the first instance, or ring the hospital or clinic from which you were discharged. You may get some tender lumps on your legs where the veins were removed. This is normal and the lumps will settle.

Will I have a check up?

This is not always essential but you may be sent an appointment.

How can I feedback on my operation?

Please send an email to enquiries@veincareclinic.net and put Veincare Feedback as the title.