

DIFFERENT TYPES OF VEINS

LINEAR SPIDER VEINS

Spider veins are small red, bluish or discolored veins that appear on the thighs, legs, ankles and even feet. Many women hate the ones that appear on the inside of their thigh and just above the knee. They are common on the outside of the thigh with an underlying green vein deeper to them. Another common region is the outside and inside of the legs. Surprisingly, many women have quite a few of them behind the knees and never know they are there until the vein exam takes place. The spider veins are in different categories. Linear, arborate and sunburst patterns. The linear type are connected or unconnected straight lines of spider veins seen anywhere on the extremities. Arborate spiders appear like a tree with branches. The sunburst or star (stellate) type seem to have a center with branches going out in all directions. Many women have a combination of all the above or may have a simple case of lineate spiders on just one area. Can you identify which ones you have? They can occur alone or may be in combination with the larger varicose veins. Sometimes, these spiders veins can actually cause pain especially when their located behind their knee and on the back of the legs. Many times these veins have a deeper feeder vein that is causing the ones you see. Patients are sometimes surprised to hear the vein doctor say he is going to treat the spider veins 4 to 10 inches away from where the main problem seems to be located. That is because the feeder vessel may be far from the visible problem. Patients will usually come to the office because these blemishes are painful and un-

ARBORATE SPIDER VEINS

SUNBURST(STELLATE)SPIDER VEINS

RETICULAR VEINS

VARICOSE VEINS

WHAT CAUSES SPIDER VEINS?

There are many theories for their cause. Bad valves in deeper vessels can allow gravity to pull blood down to the foot. This increase in "back pressure" can expand these tiny blood vessels on the surface of the skin through a system of alternate blood vessels. These can go on to form varicose veins. Some people feel they are caused by small blocks at the site near the spider vessels which cause the blood to push the vessels to the surface of the skin. Loss of the underlying strength of the supporting tissues allows the vessels to bulge out. Still others believe they run in families and the cause is not well understood. However, people on birth control pills, hormone replacement therapy and those with a genetic predisposition seem to be at higher risk. Women's monthly cycle causes estrogen to go higher and lower. This is what many feel triggers this phenomenon. They have used rabbits to prove this theory. Rabbits that were given large doses of estrogen developed veins in their long ears. (Don't worry, the rabbits were found good homes afterwards). I believe there are many factors involved. Just like some people develop acne and some do not. Spider veins are similar. Some people get them and some don't get them. There are so many factors that have to be taken into consideration. I am sure that when the jury is in, it will turn out to be a more complex blend than most realize. I have never heard or seen any topical remedy that worked well and truly ridged people of these unwanted blemishes. There are oral supplements that work in conjunction with treatment. These supplements help the body function more efficiently by ridding you of free radicals and help the skin and deeper tissues act to support the veins and other structures necessary for healthy legs. Improving your diet with more fiber, staying away from too much red meat and junk foods seem to help quite a bit. For now, see your vein doctor for treatment and supplementary help. Believe me, if I knew of the magic pill, I would be one richest doctors in the world. Yes. I would share the secret with you. It is a blend of treatment, proper diet and supplements that work the best.