

What Causes Spider Veins - Vein Institute of Utah

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What are Spider Veins?

Spider veins manifest, as the name suggests, tend to look like a spider's web. The veins are reddish, bluish, and purplish, and they appear as small lines across the legs and occasionally the face that can be seen easily on the skin. The unsightly veins are occasionally accompanied by pain, cramping, or other unpleasant sensations. The discomfort can be worse for women during certain parts of the menstrual cycle or during pregnancy. If your spider veins are causing discomfort, contact Vein Institute of Utah to take advantage of a free leg screening.



How Do You Get Spider Veins?

Spider veins are caused when the flow of blood backs up as a result of changes in hormones, exposure to the sun, and certain injuries. Some underlying factors include:

- Increased **age** as the veins start to get worn out.
- Hereditary factors, i.e. being born with weak veins or **having a family history of people with spider veins**.
- **Hormonal changes**, such as happen during puberty, pregnancy, and menopause, or when taking certain drugs, such as birth control pills or estrogen supplements.
- **Obesity**, which causes increased pressure on the veins.
- A **sedentary lifestyle**, which causes the veins to work harder to pump blood. [Crossing or bending your legs for extended periods of time can also contribute to developing spider veins if you are already genetically predisposed to spider veins.](#)
- Exposure to **the sun**, which can cause spider veins on the face of someone with fair skin.
- **Pregnancy** can also cause spider veins because the condition creates an increased amount of blood in the body. Often the situation improves by itself about three months after delivery.

Spider Veins During Pregnancy

[During pregnancy](#), there is an increase in the amount of blood in a pregnant woman's body. This can cause veins to increase in size, and the growing [uterus](#) puts additional pressure on the veins. **Try getting plenty of vitamin C and not crossing your legs. Exercising, elevating your legs while you're sitting and switching from sitting to standing all often can help encourage circulation, which may help prevent spider veins during pregnancy.** Additional [varicose veins](#) and spider veins usually appear with each additional pregnancy.

Spider Vein Prevention

To be sure, sometimes spider veins cannot be avoided. But you can undertake some measures to help prevent their occurrence.

- Be sure to **wear sunscreen** when venturing out of doors, particularly protecting the face.

- **Exercise regularly**, focusing primarily on keeping the legs toned and in shape. Walking and running are great for making sure that vein circulation is kept healthy and vigorous. Regular leg exercise is particularly important for women who are pregnant.
- **Maintain a healthy weight** by sticking to a healthy diet, making sure that those extra pounds are not there to put pressure on the veins in the legs.
- **Don't cross your legs**, especially when you have to sit for long periods, as it can result in an injury.
- **Keep your legs elevated** when you are sitting or lying in bed as much as possible, as this helps circulation. When lying down, make sure your legs are at a higher elevation than your heart for the best effect.
- **Don't stand or sit for long periods of time**. If you have to stand for any length of time, shift your weight from one leg to the other periodically. If you have to sit, get up, stand, stretch, and walk around from time to time.
- **Wear compression hosiery**. Plastic support stockings help to mitigate against the onset of spider veins. Try to avoid wearing tight clothing in your lower extremities.
- **Avoid wearing high heels**. They not only cause problems for the foot and calf muscles; they also restrict blood flow. Conversely, lower heels help to tone the calf muscles and thus facilitate blood flow.
- **Watch what you eat**. Eat foods such as fruit, vegetables, and whole grains, which are high in fiber. High fiber cuts down on constipation, which can cause spider veins. Avoid foods that are high in salt content. Less salt means less swelling that can cause spider veins. Pregnant women should consume more vitamin C.

How are Spider Veins Treated?

Spider veins can be treated with a couple of procedures . They are:

Laser treatment, which uses lasers or pulsed light to remove the spider veins using heat. The procedure is noninvasive but has certain side effects, including discoloration of the skin and sometimes blistering. Another laser treatment involves inserting a fiber optic laser into the vein and causing it to collapse. The endovenous laser procedure is done under local anesthesia in an outpatient setting.

Spider Vein Sclerotherapy uses a high-concentrated saline solution or a detergent injected directly into the vein. The vein thus treated usually vanishes gradually over a few weeks. The procedure is straightforward and cheap enough to be carried out in an outpatient setting.



[Learn More](#)



Spider vein treatment may or may not be covered by your insurance. It is best to check with your [insurance carrier](#) for your plan specifics. If you are not covered under insurance, [Vein Institute Of Utah offers payment plans in the form of Care Credit](#). [Contact us](#) today to schedule an appointment today!