

Venous insufficiency is a condition caused by decreased blood flow from the leg veins to the heart. One-way valves in the veins become weak and do not close properly, which allows blood to flow backward and results in a pooling of blood in the veins known as *reflux*. The veins become elongated, bulged and thickened, and are called **varicose veins**.

Those with venous insufficiency and varicose veins experience symptoms including leg pain, leg heaviness and leg fatigue, all which worsen as the day progresses. Also, in severe cases, the skin may become discolored and ulcerated. An interventional radiologist is able to diagnose venous insufficiency by using ultrasound to study the veins.

One method of treating varicose veins is

This treatment takes less than 1 hour and provides immediate relief of symptoms. Patients can resume normal activity directly after the procedure, and there are no stitches or scars. The procedure has a 93 to 95% success rate and low recurrence rate compared to surgery.

Another treatment option is **ambulatory phlebectomy**. This is a minimally-invasive surgical technique used to treat varicose veins that are not caused by saphenous vein reflux. Under local anesthesia, the abnormal vein is removed through one or more tiny incisions. The procedure typically takes less than an hour and most people can immediately resume normal activity.

One final option for treating veins is **sclerotherapy**, for which an extremely fine needle is used to shrink the vein by injecting it with a solution. It can be used to treat some varicose and nearly all spider veins.

With the help of our advanced technology and vein specialists, led by David E. Lee, MD, of **UR Medicine Imaging**, you can lessen or even rid yourself of those unappealing varicose and spider veins. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask during your consultation or call us ahead of time at 585-275-5142.