

# Ambulatory Phlebectomy Discharge Instructions

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## What are my care instructions after I leave the hospital?

- You will need someone to drive you home after your procedure and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- It is common to feel soreness and discomfort in your incision sites. We suggest you take an anti-inflammatory medication such as ibuprofen (Motrin<sup>®</sup>, Advil<sup>®</sup>) for relief. If this does not give you adequate pain relief, take your prescribed pain medication as needed.
- Take your temperature each morning before eating or drinking and any time you think you may have a fever.
- Look at your incision sites daily for signs of infection (increasing redness, tenderness, swelling, warmth, yellow or green drainage and/or foul smelling drainage).

## How do I take care of my incisions?

- You will be discharged from the hospital with an inner non-stretch sterile dressing covered by a stretchy ace wrap to your affected leg. There will be a certain amount of old blood or clear/beige/yellow drainage the first couple of days. This is a normal and occurs because of the disruption of the veins.
- Keep your dressing on for 48 hours.
- Take your first shower 48 hours after surgery. Follow these steps as you take your first shower:
  - Sit down and remove your dressings down to the skin and plastic strips, leaving the plastic strips in place until they come off on their own or are taken off in clinic.
  - After throwing away the dressings, sit down and move your leg around for about 5 minutes to get your blood circulating.

- Wash your incisions with mild soap and pat dry lightly. Avoid strong soaps, chemicals (like alcohol) and creams near the incisions.
- Re-wrap the affected leg 1-2 times per day, starting from the base of your toes and covering the entire surgical area.
- You may need to take the dressing down and rewrap a few time a day.
- Leave your compression stocking or ace wraps off at night after 48 hours.
- Do not sit in bath tubs, hot tubs or pools until your first post-operative visit or for the next 4 weeks.

### **What will my incisions look like?**

The incision scars may become more noticeable and thicker over the first 3-6 months. They usually become less noticeable after 6 months to 1 year.

### **What should my activity level be?**

- Walk on the first night after surgery.
- After the first day expect to make daily progress to get back to your usual physical activity.
- When resting, elevate your legs above your heart.
- Discuss your return to work with your provider.

### **How can I improve my venous health?**

It is always important to do activities that help to keep the blood moving in your veins and encourage blood flow back to the heart. You can improve your vein health by following a few simple steps:

- After the first clinic visit go back to wearing compression stockings during the day if you can.
- Regularly elevate your legs above the level of the heart
- Walk frequently, and engage in exercises that use leg muscles.

## **What follow- up care will I receive?**

You will have a post-operative visit in the Vascular Surgery Clinic in approximately one week after your procedure. Please call **888-287-1082** to schedule this visit. At the one-week visit, your provider will decide when you should return for your next visit (one to three months).

## **When do I need to seek emergency care?**

Call 9-1-1 immediately if:

### **If you have any of the symptoms below:**

- Sudden chest pain
- Bleeding that does not stop
- Shortness of breath
- If you believe that you are having a true emergency.

### **If you have any of the following symptoms of a stroke:**

- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding others
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, usually on one side of your body
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden or severe headache with no known cause

## **When should I call the clinic?**

Call the Vascular Surgery Clinic if have any of the following signs and symptoms:

- Temperature of 101.5°F or greater taken under the tongue
- Signs of infection:
  - Red streaking going up the affected leg

- Significant increase in pain
- Drainage from any incision that is yellow, green, milky-looking and/or foul smelling.

### **What is the number to call?**

- Monday through Friday from 8am to 4:30pm: **(888) 287-1082** and ask to speak to a Vascular Surgery Nurse if you have any of the symptoms listed above.
- After 4:30pm or on weekends or holidays: Call the paging operator at **(734) 936-6267** and ask for the Vascular Surgery Resident on call. You will receive a call back from the Resident Doctor.

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CVC Control #1097

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