



North Valley Surgical Associates, PC

General & Minimally Invasive Surgery

Debora Gama Lima, MD

Brian Lipton, MD, PhD

Barbara Merz, MD

R. Alejandro Morales, DO

Amy Erlenbusch, PA-C

VARICOSE VEIN SURGERY

There is good news about varicose vein treatment. An exciting technology for treating venous reflux and varicose veins was approved in 1999 and has gained wide acceptance over the past 2 years. This new treatment is the Closure procedure. Before explaining closure, we must understand what causes varicose veins.

WHAT CAUSES VARICOSE VEINS?

Blood in our arteries and veins is subject to the pull of gravity. In arteries, that pull is negligible because of the pressure generated by our heart greatly overcomes it. In veins, blood pressure is minimal, (about 0-5 versus about 120 in arteries) and the pull of gravity is therefore significant. This leads to pooling of blood in dependent areas of the body (legs and feet for most of us who spend much of the day upright). The tendency of blood to pool in the legs should be counteracted by the action of valves within the veins that only allow blood to flow in one direction (back to the heart). For many reasons these valves can "wear out." This is called valve incompetence and is more common in woman than in men. Incompetence is induced particularly by hormonal cycles and pressure changes related to pregnancy. It also is made worse by occupations and lifestyles that require prolonged standing in place as well as heredity.

As valves fail, the vein segments below them are exposed to higher pressure. The next valve in the chain then fails, and so on until there are areas of vein that have much higher than normal pressure within them. This causes the vein to dilate, much like a balloon. The vein may leak blood or blood pigments out into surrounding tissues or even rupture. This can lead to ulcer formation or life-threatening bleeding.

We cannot cure the pull of gravity. Once the valves have become incompetent, they cannot be fixed. Yet the problems caused by chronic vein disease are very treatable. As with most incurable medical conditions, this treatment involves many different therapy types or modalities.

NEW PROCEDURES: ENDOVENOUS ABLATION OR VNUS CLOSURE

Recently, a new procedure called Endovenous Ablation or VNUS Closure has been developed. This procedure is minimally invasive, and uses one small "band-aid" incision. Under ultrasound guidance a thin, flexible catheter is inserted into the vein that runs up the inner thigh to the groin. Heat is applied to the end of the catheter while it is pulled back through the vein. The heat causes the vein to coagulate and collapse. Over several months, the body absorbs the collapsed vein remnant. With the Closure procedure, there is markedly less bruising and scarring when compared to old-fashioned vein stripping. One leg is treated at a time, and if the other leg requires treatment it can be done as soon as one week later. For more information or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Aaron Scott, call (602) 995-0822. Additional information may be found by visiting www.VNUS.com; click on "Patient Information."

This material is presented for information only. If you have concerns about your health, consult your personal physician.

ph 602.995.0822

fax 602.995.0825

Main Office

15600 N. Black Canyon Hwy
Suite 102C
Phoenix, Arizona 85053