

Saphenous Vein Ligation and strip

Dressings, Bandages and stockings:

At the end of your operation you will have a soft **Duoderm** dressing applied to the incision in the groin or behind the knee. You may have a number of paper Steristrips covering small incisions down the leg. Over all these will be a full-length, multilayered bandage.

The Bandages should be removed the morning after the operation. If you are already home, this should be easy to do by yourself or with the help of a partner. They may be unwrapped or cut off then thrown out. Be aware that there may be some dried blood on the bandages.

You may have a shower (avoid baths) and pat your legs and the dressings dry with pat a towel. You should put the compression stockings on as soon as the leg is dry. If you have your own Class 2 compression stockings, put them on now. If not, wear the lighter TED stockings that were supplied by the hospital.

- Wear the stockings day and night for the rest of the first week.
- Wear the stockings during the day for the second week.

Unless you are specifically advised, there will be no sutures to remove. The steristrips and the Duoderm dressing should be removed after **3 days** or sooner if they appear untidy or about to fall off.



Remove the Bandages on Day 1 and the dressings on Day 3.

Post Operative Bleeding

Occasionally there may be some bleeding from the incisions where the veins were removed. The highest risk for this is during the first shower. The bleeding can be quite brisk if not properly managed. **Remember:** the bleeding will stop quickly and easily if the legs are elevated. It is much more difficult to stop while the legs are down.

Lie down, elevate your legs and apply light pressure. The bleeding should stop after a few minutes. You should then apply a light bandage and return to bed for 2 hours before trying to walk again.

Post -Operative Pain and Bruising

There may be some pain and discomfort after the procedure. Paracetamol or and an anti-inflammatory such as Brufen or Neurofen should be sufficient to settle this. If stronger medications are required, please contact the office.

Occasionally haematomas form within the remaining fragments of veins. Although not dangerous, these can be tender or painful. It may be possible evacuate the blood under local anaesthetic and this can reduce the pain considerably. Please contact the office if any particularly large or painful clots occur.

If staining or bruising does occur, it may persist for weeks to months before fading. **Hirudoid** cream or gel is available from pharmacists and can speed the fading process.

Operative-Site infections.

If you have any concerns, particularly if the wounds appear increasingly red or painful, if you have any shakes, shivers or other signs of infection please contact the rooms. If the rooms are unattended, please contact your GP or present to the hospital emergency department.

Return to work, travel and exercise

Unless specifically advised, you may return to work when pain permits. For most people this is in about 7 days, however you may need to be prepared to take up to 2 weeks off work. Try to avoid static stand for prolonged periods of time for the first few days and keep your leg elevated when you are at rest. If you must stand, wear the stockings. If you require a Medical certificate, please contact the office to arrange.

Regular walking is important to speed recovery. You should aim to walk for at least 40mins each day, starting on day one. You can return to light running, bike riding or swimming after about 1 week. Delay strenuous or high intensity training for about 2 weeks.

It is sensible to avoid driving for about 3 days following surgery. After this, you may drive as pain permits. You must ensure that you can comfortably operate the vehicle and are not restricted or distracted by pain or discomfort. If you are travelling longer distances as a passenger, take decent breaks of about 20 minutes every hour and do some walking in those breaks. If possible elevate the legs, and move your ankles back and forth 10 times every 10 minutes.

You may travel by air for short trips (Wagga to Sydney or Melbourne is fine) but be conscientious with good hydration, compression stockings and in-flight exercises. If you are planning a trip of more than 4 hours duration, please discuss this with Mr Airey.

Follow up

If an appointment was not made prior to discharge from hospital, please contact the rooms on 6921 6400 to make an appointment for 2 weeks ultrasound performed in the rooms and a 6 week ultrasound and consultation with Mr Airey. If you would prefer the 2-week ultrasound to be done in another practice, please let the office know, and a referral will be supplied.