

Minimally invasive vein treatment restores circulation

West Florida Vein Center
A Division of Surgical Associates of West Florida
MARK A. ZUZGA, DO, RVT

“My legs used to feel so heavy, like I was walking around on two tree trunks all the time,” shares Julia Rovello. “On top of that, my toes were always cold and numb, and my legs looked blue and unhealthy.”

“To be honest, I thought I had poor circulation because of all my years doing odd jobs that kept me on my feet all the time.”

When Julia’s discomfort grew worse following her son’s birth in 1994, she consulted a doctor who performed an ultrasound test, revealing varicose veins as her underlying problem.

“That came as a surprise, because my veins weren’t bulging and purple,” states Julia. “I didn’t have a clue that I was suffering from varicose veins.”

Julia’s vein doctor used sclerotherapy injections to treat her superficial vein problem and advised Julia to have the saphenous veins in her legs stripped out to treat the deeper varicosities.

“That would have meant being off my feet for six weeks or more,” says Julia. “I didn’t have time for that. Medical advances happen all the time, so I waited to see if researchers would perfect a procedure for problem veins like mine.”

Julia waited for years, and her problem veins caused new symptoms. “I’m not standing all the time anymore,” notes Julia. “I sit at work now, and my legs began to fall asleep from the knees down every day. I also started having



WELCOME RELIEF.
Julia’s leg pain was relieved with EVLT treatments carefully administered by Dr. Zuzga.

trouble sleeping at night because it felt like there were pins and needles in my lower legs.”

Julia was in her primary care physician’s office one day last year when she saw a chart about problem veins and read about a procedure called *endovenous laser treatment*, or EVLT.

“It had a really quick recovery time,” remembers Julia, “so I called my vein doctor to see if he thought I could benefit from it and to find out if my insurance would cover it.”

With positive responses to both questions, Julia was happy to accept a referral to fellowship-trained vascular surgeon and vein specialist Mark A. Zuzga, DO, RVT, at West Florida Vein Center, a division of Surgical Associates of West Florida.

“Dr. Zuzga and his staff were all very pleasant and personable

and went out of their way to make me feel comfortable,” Julia recalls, “but it was also clear from the very beginning that Dr. Zuzga is a perfectionist in treating vein problems. He examined my legs, and, step by step, he explained what needed to be done to relieve my discomfort and improve the health of my legs.”

About varicose veins

Dr. Zuzga explains that approximately 60% of Americans suffer from vein disorders. “Hereditary is a strong risk factor,” he informs, “and people who stand in place or sit for long periods of time without walking often complain of varicose veins. Vein disease can also be influenced by hormonal changes, pregnancy, weight gain, and age.”

Varicose veins develop when the tiny one-way valves that help move blood back to the heart fail to close properly and allow blood to flow backward in the veins. The blood forms pools that stretch and stress the veins further and may cause a bulging, unsightly appearance on the surface of the skin.

“Varicose veins often cause discomfort such as the heaviness, numbness, and tingling sensations Julia described,” continues Dr. Zuzga, “and it is common for symptoms to intensify the more a person is on his or her feet. Many people have unsightly bulging veins, whereas others only have leg swelling.”

Dr. Zuzga teaches that when patients experience symptoms like these, it is important to have the leg veins assessed. Leaving varicose veins untreated can lead to much more serious difficulties, including leg ulcers, infection, and a breakdown of the skin.

Finding relief

“At West Florida Vein Center, we offer a full range of advanced, minimally invasive treatment options for addressing varicose and spider veins,” assures Dr. Zuzga.

Microphlebectomy accesses bulging veins through a series of small incisions that allow the skilled surgeon to carefully withdraw the vein in small sections. Most patients feel nothing except the initial anesthetic injection, and following the procedure Dr. Zuzga advises patients to rest for up to 48 hours and to avoid strenuous activity, swimming, and soaking in hot tubs for a week to 10 days. He prescribes a pain reliever to reduce



Mark A. Zuzga, DO, RVT, received his bachelor’s degree from Oakland University and his medical degree from Michigan State University. He completed a general surgery residency at Mount Clemens General Hospital, MI, a vascular surgery fellowship at Deborah Heart and Lung Center, NJ. In addition, he completed an interventional endovascular fellowship at Union Memorial Hospital, Baltimore, MD, where he acquired state-of-the-art training in minimally invasive treatments for vascular disease, including carotid artery stenting, stenting for the

treatment of aortic aneurysms, and angioplasty of peripheral arteries. Dr. Zuzga is a member of the International Society of Endovascular Specialists and has coauthored many publications and studies on vascular disease.

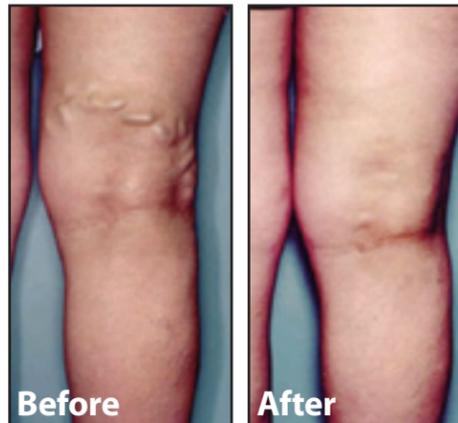
any minor discomfort for the first day or two following treatment. “For most patients, this is simply precautionary,” says Dr. Zuzga. “Extra-strength Tylenol or Motrin is all that is required in many cases.” The tiny incisions on the leg heal with little evidence left on the surface of the skin, and Dr. Zuzga encourages patients to walk to promote healing and circulation.

Sclerotherapy is often used to treat smaller varicose veins and spider veins by injecting them with a solution that gently closes the small blood vessels. Itching and burning sensations may last for 5 to 15 minutes following treatment, but Dr.

fort of a doctor’s office, this treatment introduces a sterile laser fiber into the incompetent vein via a small puncture in the leg. Laser energy is delivered through this fiber, painlessly closing the vein in less than an hour using local anesthesia. EVLT offers a relatively comfortable and highly effective way to treat varicose veins. This laser can also be used to treat superficial leg and face veins.”

EVLT results in little to no discomfort for the patient, causes no scarring, restores circulation and a more aesthetic appearance, and allows quick return to normal activities.

Dr. Zuzga suggested EVLT to treat Julia’s problem leg veins.



Painful varicose veins are treated with EVLT, restoring comfort and a healthy appearance.

BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS COURTESY OF DR. ZUZGA

Comfortable correction

“I had my first leg treated in September 2006 and my second leg treated two months later,” informs Julia. “Dr. Zuzga and his nurse had advised me to expect a little discomfort during treatment, but I have to say it wasn’t bad at all. There was a pinching feeling when the anesthetic was delivered, but that was about it, even though the laser was introduced through the most tender part of my leg — that soft spot on the inner thigh.”

Today, Julia says, “I feel 150 percent better, much better than I have in a long time. My toes feel wonderful, not cold or tingly, and my legs no longer fall asleep when I sit at work. That heavy, tree-stump feeling is gone when I walk, too, and now my legs look healthy again.”

“Dr. Zuzga worked wonders on my legs, and I’ve already referred others to him to get the same fast and effective relief.”

FHCN—Billie S. Noakes

West Florida Vein Center participates in Medicare and all major insurance plans.

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Julia was so pleased with Dr. Zuzga that she referred her friend Marie Costello to him for treatment as well.

