Varicose Veins

Varicose veins are veins that have become enlarged and twisted. Valves in the veins help return blood from the leg to the heart. If these valves are damaged, blood flows backwards and backs up into the veins in the leg near the skin. This causes the veins to become larger because of increased pressure within. People who are on their feet a lot, who are pregnant, or who are overweight are more likely to develop varicose veins.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Do not stand or sit in one position for long periods of time. Do not sit with your legs crossed. Rest with your legs raised during the day.
- Wear elastic stockings or support hose. Do not wear other tight encircling garments around legs, pelvis, or waist.
- Walk as much as possible to increase blood flow.
- Raise the foot of your bed at night with 2-inch blocks.
- If you get a cut in the skin over the vein and the vein bleeds, lie down with your leg raised and press on it with a clean cloth until the bleeding stops. Then place a dressing on the cut. See a caregiver if it continues to bleed or needs stitches.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- The skin around your ankle starts to break down.
- You have pain, redness, tenderness, or hard swelling developing in your leg over a vein.
- You are uncomfortable with leg pain.

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