

How to deal with staining/matting/ulceration

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Dealing with staining, matting ulceration and resistant spider veins

Staining

Staining can be a difficult issue when treating spider veins. Staining occurs because of the hemosideran contained in the blood. Prior to our current treatment regimen, staining could be dealt with by using very dilute concentrations of sotradecol. IPL could also hasten the fading process but in general, tincture of time was required for staining to fade. Currently, our practice is experimenting with the erbium laser. We are treating these patients at approximately 50 microns.

Angiogenesis and Matting

As with the presence of any spider complex, there is a cause that has not been addressed. Matting or angiogenesis are generally a result of 1 of 3 things.

- The reticular veins have not been adequately treated
- Truncal insufficiency has not been addressed.
- There is an insufficient branch off the saphenous vein has not been addressed.

In our center we do an ultrasound on anyone who presents with this pattern to rule out saphenous insufficiency and look for any incompetent branches leading to the complex. If any incompetence is found, the saphenous is closed using the laser ablation procedure or a small cut down is performed to avulse the incompetent branch. If no reflux is noted, the venoscope is used to identify the reticular veins still associated with the complex.

Ulcerations

Ulcerations due to sclerotherapy are a complication but are not common. We generally see patients presenting with this complication approximately 1-2 times per year. Our centers use very dilute solutions to help combat the incidence of ulceration. Generally, ulcerations are most common at the ankle and on the anterior aspect of the shin. They can, however, appear anywhere on the leg that has been treated. In our experience, gently pressure when injecting is very important in minimizing the occurrence of ulcerations. It is believed that injecting under high pressure causes the tissue necrosis rather than actual extravasation of the solution. Ulcerations can be treated with antibiotic ointment and keeping the area covered. If they are large, using a small amount of domes paste can be effective in clearing up the area or the use of any of the many wound treatments available today.