

The Vein Institute of Blue Bell

Fort Washington Radiological Associates

721 Arbor Way, Suite 103 • Blue Bell, PA 19422

Office: (267) 416-9534

PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS RADIOFREQUENCY ABLATION OF VEINS

Radiofrequency ablation (RFA) of a vein is an outpatient procedure that involves using heat energy to stop the flow of blood at the site of the vein that has failed. As a result of this procedure, the vein will close and eventually disappear, allowing blood to divert to healthy veins in the leg.

How long will the procedure take?

An appointment for RFA vein treatment takes approximately two hours, though it may require more or less time.

What can I expect before, during and after the procedure?

The procedure is performed in our outpatient office. Although not required, we recommend that you take a mild sedative by mouth prior to the procedure.

During the procedure a local anesthetic is used, and for most patients, the procedure causes little or no pain. You are encouraged to tell your doctor if any pain occurs so more local anesthesia can be administered.

After the procedure, you may resume most normal activities immediately. Most patients are able to return to work within 1- 2 days after their appointment. You must have a driver immediately following your appointment, so be prepared to have someone accompany you to your visit, or have someone we may call when you are finished with treatment.

Day of Procedure Preparation

Please read all instructions as part of preparing for your appointment:

1. Refrain from shaving your legs the morning of the procedure. This will reduce the risk of razor burn irritation from the sterilizing wash.
2. Take all regular medications the day of the procedure.
3. Fasting is not required; eat a light to normal breakfast or lunch.
4. Although not required, but strongly suggested, you will be prescribed a light sedative to help you relax prior to your appointment.
5. You may bring an iPod or headset if you'd like to listen to music during the procedure.
6. Prepare to bring or wear underwear (preferably high cut) that you are willing to have stained. You may want a second pair to change into after the procedure is over.
7. You will need to have compression stockings available for use after the procedure. You may purchase them through us the day of the procedure. However, we recommend that you have them available prior to your procedure day.
8. **Drink as much fluid as possible 24 hours prior to the procedure.**
9. **Drink 3-8 oz glasses of water or juice the morning of the procedure.**

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The RFA Vein Procedure

1. Once you arrive for your appointment at our center, you will change into a gown.
2. Your leg will be rechecked using Ultrasound. The doctor will write on your leg with a surgical marker.
3. Your vital signs will be checked, and you'll be asked to relax on the table. There are pillows and blankets available for your comfort. If you brought a listening device, you can begin listening to music.
4. Your leg will be cleansed with a cleaning solution to the groin.
5. A needle will be placed in the problematic vein, usually at or around the level of your knee, or in the middle section of the back of your calf. You will be given a local anesthetic during this part of the procedure that will cause a burning sensation.
6. Under Ultrasound guidance, an ablation catheter will be threaded up to the highest point of venous insufficiency. There should be little or no discomfort. The area to be treated will then be fully anesthetized with a solution called tumescent anesthesia. This will be given through a series of small injections that may be mildly uncomfortable.
7. The heat ablation fiber will then be turned on, and the ablation of the vein will begin. This process should take approximately 2 minutes.
8. After the procedure is complete, your leg will be cleansed by our staff and wrapped in ACE bandages. You will be discharged home immediately after the procedure.

If you have any questions or concerns about your radiofrequency ablation of the greater saphenous vein procedure, please call our office at 267-416-9534.