

Are there any risks or complications?

The medicine used can cause your skin to be irritated, sore, and look bruised. This can last for 1 to 2 weeks. Some people get blisters and/or pale spots around the needle site.

Any time the skin is pierced or cut, there is a chance of infection. There is a small chance you could get a blood clot, which could travel to a deeper leg vein (deep vein thrombosis), or have damage to tissues or nerves near the treated area.

How do I take care of myself at home?

Needle site care

Remove the bandage over the needle site the day after your procedure.

You can shower or bath 24 hours after the procedure.

Activity at home

Depending on the area(s) treated, we might ask you to limit certain activities for a period of time. We will give you specific instructions at the end of the procedure.

Return to taking your regular medicines. If needed, take plain acetaminophen (Tylenol) for pain.

When to get help

Contact your doctor or specialist if you have any of the following:

- fever above 38.5°C (101°F), aches, chills
- pain that gets worse or does not go away with pain medicine
- coolness and change in colour of the skin around the treated area (skin becomes pale, grey, blue, or black coloured)
- blisters over the treated area
- any numbness or tingling around the area treated

Go to the nearest Emergency Department if:

- you have a new arm or leg weakness
- you have trouble breathing or chest pain
- you cannot contact your doctor

Tell the Emergency personnel you have had sclerotherapy.

Locations

Vancouver General Hospital 604-875-4111
Interventional Radiology, Jim Pattison Pavilion Ext 68612
Station 4, Ground Floor, 855 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver

HealthLinkBC 8-1-1

Call any time you have any questions or concerns. HealthLinkBC is open 24 hours. Available in 130 languages. For an interpreter, say your language in English. Wait until an interpreter comes on the phone.

www.fraserhealth.ca • www.vch.ca

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

March 2020

FH Catalogue # 266409 To order: patienteduc@fraserhealth.ca
VCH/PHC Catalogue # FD.850.S35 To order: vch.eduhealth.ca



Sclerotherapy

What is a Sclerotherapy?

We use sclerotherapy (say *sk-l-air-oh-th-air-ah-pee*) to treat abnormal changes in blood vessels (usually veins but sometimes lymph vessels as well).

We inject a medicine, called a sclerosing agent, into the area. This medicine shrinks the abnormal vessels by damaging the lining of the vessel, which shuts down the blood supply.

The procedure is a way to reduce the size of the vessels so they are less bulky and less painful, making it easier for you to move about. Some people need more than one session to treat the area completely.

Who does the procedure?

An interventional radiologist does the procedure (a doctor who specializes in image-guided procedures using ultrasound, fluoroscopy, and CT scanning).

If you have questions about the procedure, you can ask the interventional radiologist before your procedure.

How long will it take?

The procedure can take between 30 minutes to 2 hours.

Can I bring a relative/friend?

Yes, a relative or friend can stay with you before and after the procedure. However, for safety reasons, they cannot be in the room with you during the procedure.

You must arrange for a responsible adult to drive or escort you home after this procedure.

What do I need to do to prepare for this?

Our Medical Imaging Department contacts you with specific instructions on how to prepare for this procedure. It might include a separate appointment to see the radiologist before the procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

You lie on the x-ray table. How you lie down depends on the area(s) we are treating.

The radiologist:

- Uses ultrasound imaging along with previous scanned images to locate the area to be treated.
- Guides a needle to the area. This could mean going through the arteries and veins to get to the area.
- Might inject a small amount of contrast dye to confirm the needle is in the correct place.
- Injects the sclerosing agent into the area and removes the needle.
- Presses gently on the area for a few minutes to prevent bleeding.

Will it hurt?

It might sting or burn as the needle goes through your skin. You might have some pain or discomfort while we are treating the area.

Depending on the size and location of the area(s), we might give you medicine to help you relax and/or sleep through the procedure.

What happens after the procedure?

We move you to a recovery area to rest for 30 minutes to 1 hour. During this time, we check you and the treated area(s) to make sure you have good blood flow and feeling in the area.

We move you to a nursing unit in the hospital. Most people stay here between 1 to 4 hours.

If your procedure involved going through an artery to get to the area, you might be on bed rest for 4 to 6 hours. Some people need to stay in the hospital overnight.

We talk with you about what is involved before the procedure.