

I hate my varicose VEINS

Makeover

How can I show my legs this summer when they're so lumpy and unattractive?

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AGE: 33
LIVES: Richmond, Vic
OCCUPATION: Shop assistant

I WISH: I've had varicose veins since I was 17. Mum and Dad both had them so I guess I didn't stand a chance. The real trouble started when I got pregnant. After Cody was born in 1996, I had an operation under general anaesthetic to have the veins removed. It was very painful and I remember a man saying to me, "My wife had the same thing done and they came back, love." He was right. Three years later, when I got pregnant with Justine, the unsightly veins were back. I had them stripped again in 2003, but now my legs are worse than ever. I don't just have varicose veins that hurt and bulge out, my legs are also covered in spider veins. I'm 180cm tall, so I've a lot of leg to hide! I've heard there's a treatment called sclerotherapy, but it's out of my price range. Can you please help me, Take 5?

My wardrobe is so limited

Because I have to cover up all the time, I'm always in pants. I haven't worn a dress, skirt or shorts for about 15 years.



What self-esteem?

I write songs and I love singing, but I don't have the confidence to perform in public. I'd love to be an entertainer but with these legs, I just don't see it happening.

TAKE 5 TO THE RESCUE



Take 5 Beauty and Fashion Editor **Janine Donovan**



Make-up artist **Deanne Dority**



Phlebologist **Dr Ivor Berman**



Sclerotherapist **Dr Dennis McCurdy**

I miss the water

As a kid, we lived across the road from the local pool and it was my second home. But I had to give up swimming when I was 17 as I was too embarrassed to let anyone see my revolting legs. I would love the confidence to go back to the pool again.

Turn the page

See Janet's **AMAZING NEW LOOK**

Look at my LOVELY LEGS

Someone can help me!

I was so surprised when Take 5 phoned me to say that they could help get my varicose veins treated. Before I knew it, I was having a consultation with Dr Ivor Berman, a radiologist and phlebologist (vein specialist), who told me that my varicose veins could be treated with a new procedure called sclerotherapy. "The traditional method of treating varicose veins has been surgically with stripping the veins away, which required hospitalisation, general anaesthetic and often unsightly scarring," he explained. "But now there's a new method ..."

Get better legs in your lunch hour

Dr Berman explained that most people could have treatment and be back at work that same day. "New methods with similar outcomes are performed on a walk-in and walk-out basis," he said. "There is a return to work the same or next day, with most procedures taking less than an hour, and the vast majority of patients only needing one or two treatments."

How does it work?

"Sclerotherapy involves injecting a special solution called a sclerosant into the veins," Dr Berman said. "Two products that are used act by washing away the lining of the vein, allowing the vein walls to stick together." It was great to hear him say the veins would fade and eventually no longer be seen. Dr Berman said even though I was a "severe case", he'd still be able to treat me using sclerotherapy.

Goodbye spider veins

A month later, after the bruising had settled, I met Dr Dennis McCurdy, who specialises in sclerotherapy for spider veins. "Dr Berman has done a good job with the large, deep veins, now it's time for us to do the fiddly work," he said. Dr McCurdy injected one leg at each session with sclerosant. It was painless and took about 30 minutes each time. I had seven treatments in all, a week apart.

NOTE: There's no Medicare rebate for spider vein sclerotherapy because it's deemed a "cosmetic" treatment.

Did you know?
Varicose vein disease, if left untreated, could cause serious health problems such as blood clots and leg ulcers.

My first treatment

Dr Berman's sonographer, Jane, did the ultrasound, allowing him to see where to inject the sclerosant. He did about five injections in each leg – and they stung. The treatment took about an hour. I left in a pair of special support stockings and was given a plastic shower cover to keep my legs dry. My legs were bruised, red and aching for a couple of days. I had two more treatments with Dr Berman, both two weeks apart.

The future

I'll need to have a check-up every 12 months as new veins can develop. It's a lifetime project, but at least there's no down time – not like having the veins stripped.

Swimsuit, \$119.95, by Palazzi. Dress, \$129, by Jane Lamerton. Both from Myer. Shoes, \$39.95, by Payless Shoes. Spray tan, \$40. **TOTAL COST \$328.89**

What it cost

Varicose veins: the initial consultation was bulk-billed + 6 sessions at \$540 each = \$3240. Medicare rebate \$2560. Cost **\$680**

Spider veins: initial consultation \$55 + 7 sessions at \$175 each = **\$1280** (no Medicare rebate)

Total cost = \$1960
* Prices will vary – approximate costs only.

STYLING: JANINE DONOVAN HAIR BY BERNADETTE ABOOD OF L'BRIDAL MOBILE HAIR, PHONE 0411 835 988 MAKE-UP BY DEANNE DORITY, PHONE 0413 648 844 SPRAY TAN FROM FIFTY-FOUR PARK STREET, PHONE 9282 8999 STORY: LYN JUSTICE PICTURES: LISA SAAD AND ROB SHAW

Now I can swim again
Take 5's fashion and beauty editor Janine Donovan took me for a spray tan to show off my new smooth legs, then later we went shopping for a pretty dress and sexy cossie. I can't wait to hit the water. My kids and my partner, Mark, won't believe their eyes.

Spring make-up

To complete my transformation, Deanne gave me a sun-kissed look to match my spray tan. For my eyes she chose shimmer apricot, gold and caramel shadows, black eye liner and two coats of black mascara. She finished with soft coral blush and shimmer coral lip gloss.

I've lost weight, too!

Since winning the makeover, I've lost 22kg and 14cm off my waist. I've also dropped from a size 22 to a size 16! I did it by eating smaller portions and healthy snacks. I also did a little gym workout at home with 5kg dumbbell hand weights and lots and lots of sit-ups. Ouch!

What a difference!
I can't believe how much better my legs look now. I wish I'd done this years ago.

Bursting with confidence

As my legs started to look better, I started an acting course. It's something I've always wanted to do, but I kept putting it off because I never had enough confidence. I'm also more serious about my singing and reckon I'm nearly ready to hit the stage. Thanks Take 5!

Hair with attitude

Bernadette gave my boring, mousy hair some oomph with a rich chocolate brown colour and caramel blonde foils that she marbled through the front with her fingers. "Now I'm going to give you a funky, choppy haircut," she said. She cut shorter layers through the back and had the hair falling softly around my face and neck. I love it!



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