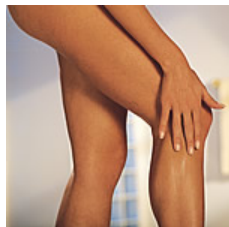


## 5 treatments to get rid of varicose veins

Learn about nonsurgical options and new treatments, plus tips to keep the veins away for good.

By Julie Hunter



Vein, vein, go away! Thirty years ago the appearance of a varicose vein meant the end of skirts and a life condemned to pants and compression stockings. Today, with myriad treatment options available, getting a varicose vein is nothing more than a nuisance. Here, vein expert Dr. Sanjoy Kundo of the Vein Institute of Toronto gives us advice on how to beat the vein for good.

### Find the cause

The only way you can truly know what's causing varicose veins to appear -- and the best way to treat them -- is by booking an ultrasound. Most varicose veins are a result of a faulty valve in the main draining vein of the leg. When the valve is faulty it causes the blood to backflow and overflow smaller, less "competent" veins, which then bloat with the unexpected pressure and become visible varicose veins. In 10 per cent of cases, though, the vein is an isolated, abnormal vein that is less serious and easier to treat.

### 1. Creams and pills

If compression stockings are not the avenue for you, you could try an over-the-counter **cream** like Invisi-Vein by Venus Naturals ([www.venusnaturals.com](http://www.venusnaturals.com)), whose ingredients include herbal circulation remedies like calendula extract (known for its anti-inflammatory capabilities) and **vitamin E**.

Another over-the-counter method that has been flooding the market lately is pills containing horse chestnut, such as Venarin ([www.venarin.com](http://www.venarin.com)) by Nutrica. Horse chestnut is a herbal extract whose properties, according to the Mayo Clinic, can significantly reduce pain and varicose vein size and may actually be as effective a treatment as compression stockings.

But do they work? Although these products are good sellers, Dr. Kundo dismisses creams and pills as treatment options, stating, "I've seen a lot of patients that have tried many different creams and pills, and nothing has yet to work. Once the varicose vein is there, there is an underlying problem that cannot be solved by these types of products."

### 2. Compression stockings

The least invasive and first course of action for any type of varicose veins should be compression stockings. Though unflattering, compression stockings relieve pressure on varicose veins and aid in circulation. "Be aware," warns Kundo, "although compression stockings help patients physically feel better, it is not a cure. As soon as the stockings come off the veins will come back."

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### Treating varicose veins during pregnancy

Why are pregnant women so susceptible to getting varicose veins? Find out why -- and what you can do to treat new or recurring varicose veins during pregnancy.

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