

# Natural Help 4...

# Varicose Veins



## What are Varicose Veins?

**Varicose veins** are enlarged, flesh-colored, blue or purple veins often found on the calf or on the leg. They often appear twisted and bulging, may be swollen and raised above the surface of the skin, and can become quite painful.

**Veins most commonly affected** are those in your legs and feet, since standing and walking upright increases the pressure in the veins in your lower body.

**Spider veins** are similar to [varicose veins](#), but they are just smaller and usually found on the legs and face (and are harmless).

For many people, [varicose veins](#) are just unsightly, but for others, [varicose veins](#) can cause aching pain and discomfort. [Varicose veins](#) can also signal a higher risk of problems with circulation.

## What Causes Varicose Veins?

Every day, the heart pumps blood filled with oxygen and nutrients to the whole body. Arteries carry blood from the heart towards the body parts. Veins carry oxygen-poor blood from the body back to the heart.

Veins have valves that act as one-way flaps to stop the blood from flowing backwards as it moves up the legs. If the one-way valves become weak, blood can leak back into the vein and collect there. Pooled blood enlarges the vein and it becomes varicose.

The [causes of varicose veins](#) vary from person to person, and many factors can contribute to the risk of developing [varicose veins](#). [Causes of varicose veins](#) include increasing age, having family members with vein problems or being born with weak vein valves. Other [causes of varicose veins](#) are hormonal changes due to menopause, pregnancy and puberty. Similarly so can obesity, leg injury, prolonged standing and other things that weaken vein valves. [Varicose veins symptoms](#) can cause also include sores, skin ulcers and rashes on the skin tissue around the [varicose veins](#).

## Help for Varicose Veins

Conventional treatment often includes sclerotherapy (for spider veins), where the doctor injects a solution into the vein that causes the vein walls to seal shut. Also common methods of treatment are laser surgery or surgical removal of the [varicose veins](#).

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## Natural Remedies for Varicose Veins

Many **herbal and homeopathic remedies** have been used to promote circulation, keep a healthy flow of blood pumping through the body, and serve as a **natural remedy for varicose veins**. Astragalus membranaceus is a well-known revitalizing herb used for boosting circulation, while Ruscus aculeatus is known extensively in Europe to improve circulation and relieve pain and discomfort associated with leg conditions-- thus serving as a **natural remedy for varicose veins**.

Another **natural remedy for varicose veins** includes homeopathic ingredients such as Rhus tox, Zincum metallicum and Magnesium phosphate. All help to **promote health in the lower limbs and keep lymph and blood flowing freely**. Skin health can be promoted through **homeopathic ingredients** such as Natrium muriaticum, Kalium muriaticum and Kalium sulphate to distribute oxygen throughout the body and to each individual cell, helping to keep cell membranes healthy.

By providing essential oxygen to inflamed or infected cells, these ingredients effectively **assist healing, reduce inflammation and remove infected or dead cells**.

## Tips for the Prevention of Varicose Veins

- **Wear sunscreen** to protect your skin from the sun and to limit spider veins on the face.
- **Exercise regularly** to improve your leg strength, circulation, and vein strength. Focus on exercises that work your legs, such as walking or running.
- **Control your weight** to avoid placing too much pressure on your legs.
- **Do not cross your legs** while sitting and always elevate your legs when resting as much as possible.
- **Do not stand or sit for long periods of time**. If you must stand for a long time, shift your weight from one leg to the other every few minutes. If you must sit for long periods of time, stand up and move around or take a short walk every 30 minutes.
- **Wear elastic support stockings** and avoid tight clothing that constricts your waist, groin or legs.
- **Eat a low-salt diet rich in high-fiber foods**. Eating fiber reduces the chances of constipation – which can contribute to varicose veins. High fiber foods include fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grains, like bran. Eating too much salt can cause you to retain water and cause further swelling in the legs, feet or ankles.

## The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is **not the only treatment option**. Conventional Western medicine (often called allopathic or orthodox medicine) is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools, and many pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which



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### Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available and freely used-- even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is 'better' than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that **both have a role to play in the treatment program.**

Natural medicine has often been frowned upon by conventional doctors, especially by those who do not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby **providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options** from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, **natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed** by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the **body has an innate capacity to heal itself.** While natural medicines are often called 'alternative' or 'complimentary' medicines, they are, in fact, a **unique and independent form of medicine** in their own right, well able to **treat a variety of conditions.** Perhaps the term 'holistic' medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine. This encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a **holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease.** In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to **support health** (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer. In many cases, **holistic medicine can accomplish just as much,** if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, **natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.**

In many cases, they can **succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed.** Despite frequent reports that they are 'unproven' and 'untested', the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a **long history of usage** and there is a **wealth of empirical evidence** to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to **support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.**

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines **must be manufactured in the correct way,** following acceptable

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procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately, **not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards**, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called ‘standardized’ extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While ‘**standardized**’ extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have **grave disadvantages**, including an increase in side effects, as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which **retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb** as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, **always choose wisely**. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life-threatening condition, don’t make changes without first discussing them with your doctor, in order that your condition may be monitored. **Well-informed and supportive practitioners will support patients** who want to take responsibility for their own health.

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