

The Newest and Most Promising Treatment of Spider Veins

~BY KAMRAN GOUDARZI, M.D., F.A.C.S., F.I.C.S.~

A unique technique for the treatment of spider veins that was developed in Europe has just become available in the USA. It is also going to be available at the Vein and Laser Center of Wilmington, N.C.

Known as thermo-coagulation, this method employs microwaves to heat the spider veins so that the walls of the vessel stick together. This prevents the blood flow, which causes the vessel to be visible and therefore results in the instant disappearance of the vein. No bandages are required after the relatively painless treatment and the patient can resume everyday activity immediately after the procedure.

Prior to this micro-sclerotherapy, which involves injecting an irritant into the veins, has been widely used for the removal of spider veins. Veins less than 0.3 mm could not usually be injected because of their small size. Other "vein zappers", such as the Yag Laser, are also effective but often require several, often painful treatments to see the results. Lasers also carry the risk of burns, skin pigmentation and potential scarring. However one Veinwave session usually does the trick. The Veinwave (thermo-coagulation) could also be used on the face, knees and ankles which up to now have been hard to treat. It can also be used on any kind of skin complexion.

The conclusion of a clinical survey on thermo-coagulation conducted by JM Chardonneau concluded that no known method could take credit for better results. It is supposed to "work when all other treatments, especially laser therapy, fail".

It was introduced in the UK in 2001 and recently given US Food and Drug Administration approval. Veinwave is not suitable for anyone with a pacemaker, pregnant or epileptic.

In my practice spider veins, especially the ones that are less than 0.3 mm have been a challenge to treat. They are usually too small for the finest needle to inject with a sclerosing agent. Topical laser does not seem to provide an easy and permanent solution. Another advance of Veinwave, especially in our southern warm climate, is that no stockings are required.

The procedure takes about 15-20 minutes, less time that is required to get a pedicure or manicure. One could potentially do it during ones lunchtime and get back to work, minus the spiders veins.

The FDA approved this about 1 month ago. I had the opportunity to use this device soon after on myself. I was amazed to see how effective it is. A small spider vein on my leg that had been used as a "test area" for many of my nurses was treated with the Veinwave. Despite multiple injections of sclerosing agents and topical laser,



the vein was still visible. (In all fairness, maybe I was not as aggressive treating it as I could have been!). After literally a less than 5-minute treatment with the Veinwave, the vein totally disappeared. It felt like a little pinprick. I had some small scabs for a few days and within a week or so there was no sign of it whatsoever. One month later there is still no sign of the vein. Some of my staff also tried it with excellent results. We therefore purchased this and will be one of the few centers in the United States able to offer this to our patients. For more information, please check it out on line under Veinwave.com.

I must admit that I felt there was no vein that I could not treat at the Vein and Laser Center of Wilmington. But small red spider veins, especially around the face, ankles and knees were always a challenge.

Thanks to my colleague, a vascular surgeon, Dr. Newman from the United Kingdom, and approval in the United States by the FDA, it looks as though there will be no vein too big or too small to treat at the Vein and Laser Center of Wilmington.

Dr. Kamran Goudarzi graduated from medical school from the University of London, England. He then spent 2 years at the University of London Medical School postgraduate training in surgery. He came to the United States in 1981 completing his surgical residency in the United States. He is a licentiate of Royal College of Physicians, Member of Royal College of Surgeons, Fellow of International College of Surgeons, and Fellow of American College of Surgeons. He is certified by the American Board of Surgery, recertified and again recertified by the American Board of Surgery. He is also one of 250 surgeons in the United States Board certified in Phlebology.

