

Introduction

Varicose veins are dilated, tortuous, superficial veins with incompetent valves. They often are resulted from a congenital or familial predisposition, leading to loss of elasticity of the vein wall. Life style with long periods of standing are particularly prone to varicosities.

The Operation / Procedure

Preoperative Preparation

1. Admit 1 day before or on same day of this “elective” operation.
2. Anaesthetic assessment before operation. Inform your doctors about drug allergy, your regular medications or other medical conditions.
3. Keep fast for 6 to 8 hours before operation.
4. Empty bladder and change to operation clothes before transfer to operating room.
5. Pre-medication, antibiotic prophylaxis and intravenous line may be required.



Postoperative Instruction

General

1. Mild throat discomfort or pain because of intubation.
2. Mild discomfort or pain over the operation site. Inform nurse or doctor if pain severe or need more analgesics.
3. Nausea or vomiting are common; inform nurses if symptoms severe.
4. Can mobilize and get out of bed 6 hours after operation.
5. Usually go home on day 2 after the operation.

Wound care

1. Observe the affected limbs for numbness, abnormal color and circulation.
2. In first 48 hours after operation, wear the elastic sock and avoid standing except walking to the toilet.
3. After 48 hours, wear elastic sock only in daytime and remove it before bed time, continue for 2 weeks until follow up. Change and clean the elastic sock daily.
4. While lying, sitting or sleeping, elevate the affected limb with a pillow to prevent swelling.
5. While sitting, avoid crossing legs because it will decrease the blood circulation.
6. Practise toe exercise to increase the blood circulation of lower limbs.
7. On the third day after operation, you can start walking, but avoid prolonged standing.
8. On the third day after operation, you can take shower but avoid wetting the dressing. Soap and powder can be used after the wound is healed.
9. Avoid strenuous exercise for 6 weeks after operation.
10. Keep the wound clean and dry. Do not remove the dressing before Stitches are taken off.

Diet

1. Start with fluid diet, then resume normal diet.
2. Take more fruits and vegetables to prevent constipation.

Common Risks and Complications (not all possible complications are listed)

Anesthesia related complications

1. Cardiovascular: myocardial infarction or ischaemia, stroke, deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, etc.
2. Respiratory: atelectasis, pneumonia, asthmatic attack, exacerbation of chronic obstructive airway disease.
3. Allergic reaction and shock.

Procedure related complications

1. Excessive bleeding.
2. Severe pain despite taking the pain killer.
3. Infection (redness, swelling and purulent discharge).
4. Fever (body temperature above 38°C or 100°F).
5. Wound disruption.

Things to take note on discharge

1. Contact your doctor or a nearby Accident & Emergency Department if you find the followings:
increasing pain or redness around the wound and discharge from the wound.
2. Take analgesics prescribed by your doctor if required.
3. Resume daily activity gradually.

Remarks

This is general information only and the list of complications is not exhaustive. Other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For further information please contact your doctor. Evangel Hospital reserves the right to amend this leaflet without prior notice. We welcome suggestions or enquiries on the information provided in this leaflet. Please contact our Healthcare professionals so that we could follow up and make improvement.

Reference

Hospital Authority: “Ligation and Stripping for Varicose Vein” (2022)

Smart Patient: https://www.ekg.org.hk/pilic/public/surgery_pilic/vascularurg_ligationandstrippingforvaricoseveins_0177_eng.pdf (24-07-2023)