FAQs

# Vascular Laser

1. **What is vascular laser?**

The Pulsed Dye Laser the most effective laser for removing spider veins (small dilated vessels) from the face, and cherry angiomas (small red spots on the face and body). These lesions often clear with only 1-2 treatments. it can also help fade, over the course of multiple treatments, red or raised scars, “port wine stain” birthmarks, and red discoloration of the face from rosacea.

1. **How does the laser work?**

it emits a burst of light tuned precisely to target the red pigment in blood and blood vessels without harming other parts of the skin. Therefore, this laser can remove dilated blood vessels while leaving the surrounding area unaffected. A brief pulse of a cold spray precedes the pulse of light, further protecting the skin from injury.

1. **Does this laser treatment hurt?**

Each pulse of light feels like the snapping of a small rubber band, while the cool spray of the laser minimizes this brief discomfort. A topical numbing cream may be purchased in our office. Apply a layer to the area to be treated 1 hour before your appointment. Repeat this application again 10 minutes before your treatment.

1. **What does the skin look like after treatment?**

Each pulse of light treats approximately the size of a pencil eraser. These spots often turn pink to slightly red. Occasionally, small areas may turn a purple or blue color (particularly in port wine stain treatment) that can last for about a week. You may want to schedule the treatment at a time when you don’t have major social or work commitments for 2-3 days until the redness, and occasionally swelling, go down. Makeup can generally be used after 24 hours.

1. **Are vascular lasers safe?**

Vascular lasers are safe if used by experienced and professionally trained staff. Pulsed dye lasers have been used since the 1980s to treat port wine stain birthmarks in babies and children. They are NOT associated with an increased risk of cancer in the long term.

1. **What are the risks?**

Complications of treatment with the pulsed dye laser are uncommon. Dark discoloration (hyperpigmentation) of the treated area is unlikely to occur and would fade over months; however, it is important to avoid sun exposure after treatment to minimize this risk. Light discoloration (hypopigmentation) and scarring are extremely rare. Bruising can occur but generally resolves in about a week. It is important to follow instructions regarding aspirin and ibuprofen in order to avoid bruising. Laser light cannot penetrate deeper than the skin and will not harm internal organs, but goggles must be worn to protect the eyes. Some lesions may not be completely cleared with one treatment and may require multiple treatments at an additional cost.

1. **When should I return for my next treatment? How many treatments am I going to need?**

The face and upper body are typically every 4-6 weeks while lower extremities or leg veins every 10-12 weeks. Typically, 4-6 sessions may be needed, but this is not guaranteed. Post care is a crucial factor in determining the number of sessions one will need.

1. **Are compression stockings required post leg vein treatments?**

While compression stockings are common post sclerotherapy treatments, they are not absolutely necessary after laser vein treatments.

1. **Am I going to see immediate results?**

No, the fading of the vein will be gradual and will take anywhere from a few weeks up to two months.

1. **What are the possible side effects?**

Complications may include, but are not limited to: hyper pigmentation, hypo pigmentation, blisters, burns, infection, allergic reactions, scabbing, scars, and herpes simplex activation. These side effects typically last for only a short time, but in rare cases, can last up to a few months or be permanent. Your leg’s veins may appear bruised or darker red following

treatment. This discoloration will fade over the next few weeks. Brown discoloration may take several months to fade.

1. **Are the results long lasting?**

Long-term success varies from patient to patient, vessel to vessel. Many of the vessels treated require only one or two treatments. Multiple treatments are usually required for optimum results.

1. **When can I resume normal activities?**

Although we encourage you to resume normal activities almost immediately, we do ask that you refrain from vigorous activities for at least 24 hours. Avoid exercise for 2 to 3 days after the treatment. Please also avoid hot baths and hot tubs for at least the first 24 hours. Compressive stockings are no longer used following spider removal treatment with the NDYAG Laser.

1. **How long does it take?**

For laser treatment of the veins treated through the skin, the amount of time varies. The amount of time can vary from 15 minutes to one hour depending on the size of the area being treated as well as the severity of the problem.

1. **What are advantages of laser over sclerotherapy?**

It can be used to treat veins too tiny to enter with a needle. It can be used for spider veins that look like wagon wheels resulting from high pressure centers, recovery may be more immediate and downtime is slightly less.

1. **What are disadvantages of laser over sclerotherapy?**

Laser cannot be used for deeper veins, the exception being the use of laser. Laser has more limitations on patients with dark skin and some dark-skinned patients can only be treated with sclerotherapy.

1. **Who should not undergo this procedure?**

**You may not be treated if:**

* You are pregnant
* You have been treated with the anti-acne medication Accutane (Isotretinoin) within 6 months.
* You have a tan now or within the past 4 weeks.