

Vein Treatment Clinic identifies and treats **Chronic Venous Insufficiency**

with Dr. Caroline Novak



Spider veins and varicose veins are often dismissed as a cosmetic issue, but in fact may be a signal of dysfunctional circulation in the legs. Chronic venous insufficiency, the underlying condition that causes spider and varicose veins in many individuals, can lead to leg heaviness, cramping and fatigue that may have a profound impact on quality of life. Physicians at the **Vein Treatment Clinic** (an affiliate of **VIP Medical Group**) specialize in varicose vein, spider vein and venous insufficiency treatment.

Dr. Caroline Novak is the medical director of a new state-of-the-art Vein Center in Paramus. NJ Advance Media recently spoke with her about how to recognize venous disease and the best technology available to provide minimally invasive treatments for the condition.



Q: What is chronic venous insufficiency, and what are the symptoms?

It is a disease that affects the lower extremities. The veins in the legs stop working as well as they should. All veins have to fight against gravity to bring blood flow to the heart. Blood goes through one-way doors called valves, and as it does, the valves shut, keeping blood from flowing back down.

The underlying problem here is that the valves stop working, and an excessive amount of blood goes back to the feet. It can build up over time, and people come in with a sensation of heaviness and discomfort that doesn't seem to be just an ankle or foot injury. Typically, it's worse at the end of the day, especially if an individual has a job where he or she is sitting or standing all day. There also may be a number of varicose spider veins in the leg.

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Q: How is chronic venous insufficiency treated?

We use several techniques to close unhealthy veins and reroute the blood. One technique is **Radiofrequency Ablation**, which we think has the lowest level of discomfort for the patient. We make a tiny incision and insert a specialized device into a vein in the patient's leg to deliver thermal energy to the walls of the vein. This allows the vein to close and the blood reroutes on its own. The circulatory system finds a way to go on, and usually finds better, stronger veins with healthy valves.

Another treatment is **Sclerotherapy**, where we inject a medicine called a scleroant into the vein. The medicine irritates the walls of the veins, causing them to seal together and close. It all depends on the size and shape of the vein, and where other structures in the leg, such as the arteries and nerves are, so sometimes Sclerotherapy is better. It's very individualized to the patient and their needs.

Q: How effective is the treatment?

Most people feel better right away. There is some mild soreness and bruising that may last a few days at most. If there are several areas of concern in one leg, we won't do them all on the same day, but after the first procedure, people often feel much better.



“Often, people become accustomed to their legs feeling heavier and don’t realize it’s a medical problem.”

Q: Are people often surprised to learn they have a vein disorder?

Vein disease is under diagnosed. Even many primary care physicians don't recognize the symptoms. Symptoms can be subtle and increase slowly over the years. Often, people become accustomed to their legs feeling heavier and don't realize it's a medical problem. Many people assume it's just part of the aging process. But we make a balanced decision with the patient about whether it's something we need to treat.

Q:

How do you and the staff at Vein Treatment Clinic approach each patient?

We really have a wonderful mix at our practice. We have doctors from different backgrounds who all bring something different to the table. Everyone at **VIP Medical Group** trained at a top residency, and they come from across the country and from different specialties. What I bring to the table is that I take a look at the entire patient. I see what other medical conditions a patient has, what medications they take, and see how that fits into their venous disease.

- [Visit any of the Vein Treatment Clinics several convenient locations](#)
- [Meet the rest of the Ivy-League trained Vein Treatment Clinic team](#)
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For more information, call [\(973\) 200-4494](tel:9732004494)
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