Life After a DVT

This March is the sixth annual DVT Awareness Month. Across the nation people are spreading awareness of the severity of this condition. Annually, it is estimated that two million Americans will suffer from a deep vein thrombosis (DVT), many will be unaware.

Patients with a history of DVT are aware of the acute onset of symptoms but are unaware of the long term consequences that result from the damage to the vessels from the blood clot. Long term effects may include Postphlebitic Syndrome, chronic venous insufficiency, varicose veins and ulcerations.

Most veins are equipped with one way valves that help keep the blood flowing towards the heart. During the formation of a blood clot the valves can be damaged allowing blood to pool in the lower leg. Postphlebitic Syndrome and/or chronic venous insufficiency can occur weeks to months after the occurrence of a DVT and is characterized by leg pain, swelling, itchiness, dryness, tired, achy, heavy or restless and eventually skin ulceration as a result of prolonged venous hypertension.

A venous ulcer is usually located in the area of the medial ankle. The borders of the venous ulcers tend to have an irregular shape. Venous ulcers are usually dry but can have a discharge associated with it if it becomes infected.

A venous duplex is a low cost, non invasive modality used to diagnose a DVT and chronic venous insufficiencies. This test is a simple out patient procedure that can take 20-30 minutes. Everything from varicose veins, venous insufficiency and chronic thrombus remaining in the vessel can be identified. Early detection of these conditions can help prevent the reoccurrence of DVT and slow down the progression of venous stasis ulcers. Just a reminder, a venous insufficiency Doppler is warranted when a patient has a non healing medial ankle ulcer.

Free Varicose Vein Consult
March & April

The Vein Care Center a division of Muskegon Surgical Associates, PLC
1316 Mercy Drive; Entrance B
Muskegon, MI 49444
231.739.1932