

# Varicose Veins: A Comprehensive Illustrated Guide

## What Are Varicose Veins?

Varicose veins are enlarged, twisted, and bulging veins that usually occur in the legs. They are caused by weakened or damaged valves in the veins, which allow blood to flow backward and pool in the veins. Varicose veins can range in size from small, barely visible lines to large, ropey bulges.

## Symptoms of Varicose Veins

Varicose veins can cause a variety of symptoms, including:



### Varicose Veins e-chart: Full illustrated by Robert Kirkman

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
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Screen Reader	: Supported
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- Aching or heavy legs
- Swelling in the legs and ankles
- Painful or restless legs
- Itching or burning sensations

- Discolored skin around the veins
- Ulcers on the legs

## **Causes of Varicose Veins**

Varicose veins are caused by weakened or damaged valves in the veins. These valves normally prevent blood from flowing backward in the veins. When the valves are damaged, blood can pool in the veins and cause them to enlarge and bulge. Varicose veins are more common in people who:

- Are overweight or obese
- Have a family history of varicose veins
- Stand or sit for long periods of time
- Are pregnant
- Have had a deep vein thrombosis (DVT)

## **Diagnosis of Varicose Veins**

Varicose veins can be diagnosed with a physical examination. Your doctor will look for visible veins, swelling, and discoloration. Your doctor may also order an ultrasound to confirm the diagnosis and to rule out other conditions.

## **Treatment of Varicose Veins**

The goal of treatment for varicose veins is to relieve symptoms and prevent complications. Treatment options include:

- Lifestyle changes, such as losing weight, exercising, and elevating your legs

- Compression stockings
- Sclerotherapy, which involves injecting a solution into the veins to collapse them
- Endovenous laser ablation, which uses a laser to heat and seal the veins
- Surgery

## **Complications of Varicose Veins**

Varicose veins can lead to a number of complications, including:

- Blood clots
- Eczema
- Lipodermatosclerosis, which is a hardening of the skin and tissue
- Ulcers

## **Prevention of Varicose Veins**

There is no sure way to prevent varicose veins, but there are some things you can do to reduce your risk, including:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Exercising regularly
- Elevating your legs when you are sitting or lying down
- Wearing compression stockings
- Avoiding high heels and tight clothing

Varicose veins are a common problem, but they can be treated effectively. If you are concerned about varicose veins, talk to your doctor. They can recommend the best course of treatment for you.

## Images of Varicose Veins

[Insert images of varicose veins here]



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