

Third Series

- (1) Hold onto a stable object with both hands. Stand with your heels raised. Hold for 5 seconds and then return to the standing posture
- (2) Repeat this set of movements 20 times



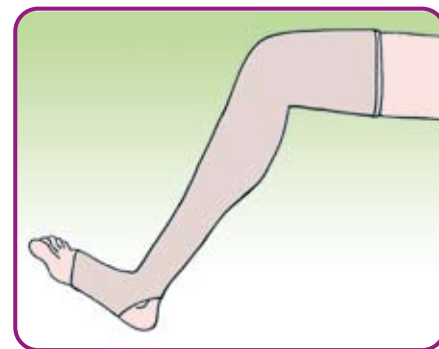
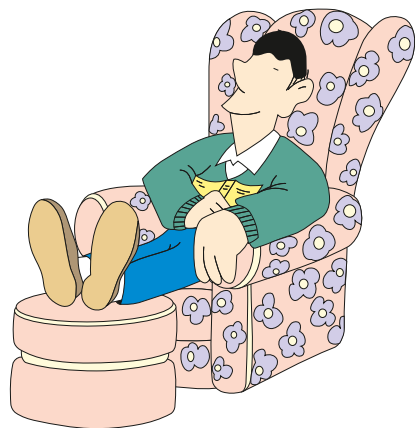
4. Healthy lifestyle

- Adequate rest and sleep
- Regular exercises
- Balanced diet and avoid overweight



How to treat it?

- ◆ Rest — Dull ache and swelling of the lower limbs can often be relieved with periodic resting and leg elevation



- ◆ Compression therapy – Wearing elastic stocking or applying elastic bandage to the affected lower limb can increase its venous blood return

- ◆ Injection treatment — Injection of sclerosant to obliterate the dilated veins
- ◆ Surgery — If severe, the involved veins can be removed by stripping, excision or ligation

Conclusion

Lower limb varicose vein is a "work-related disease". Although work is only one of the many risk factors in the development of the disease, the chance of getting this disease can be minimized by eliminating the health hazards at work, reducing the associated risks, and adopting appropriate preventive measures.

Enquiry Service

For enquiries on this pamphlet or advice on occupational health and hygiene matters, please contact the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the Labour Department through:

Telephone : 2852 4041
Fax : 2581 2049
Email : enquiry@labour.gov.hk

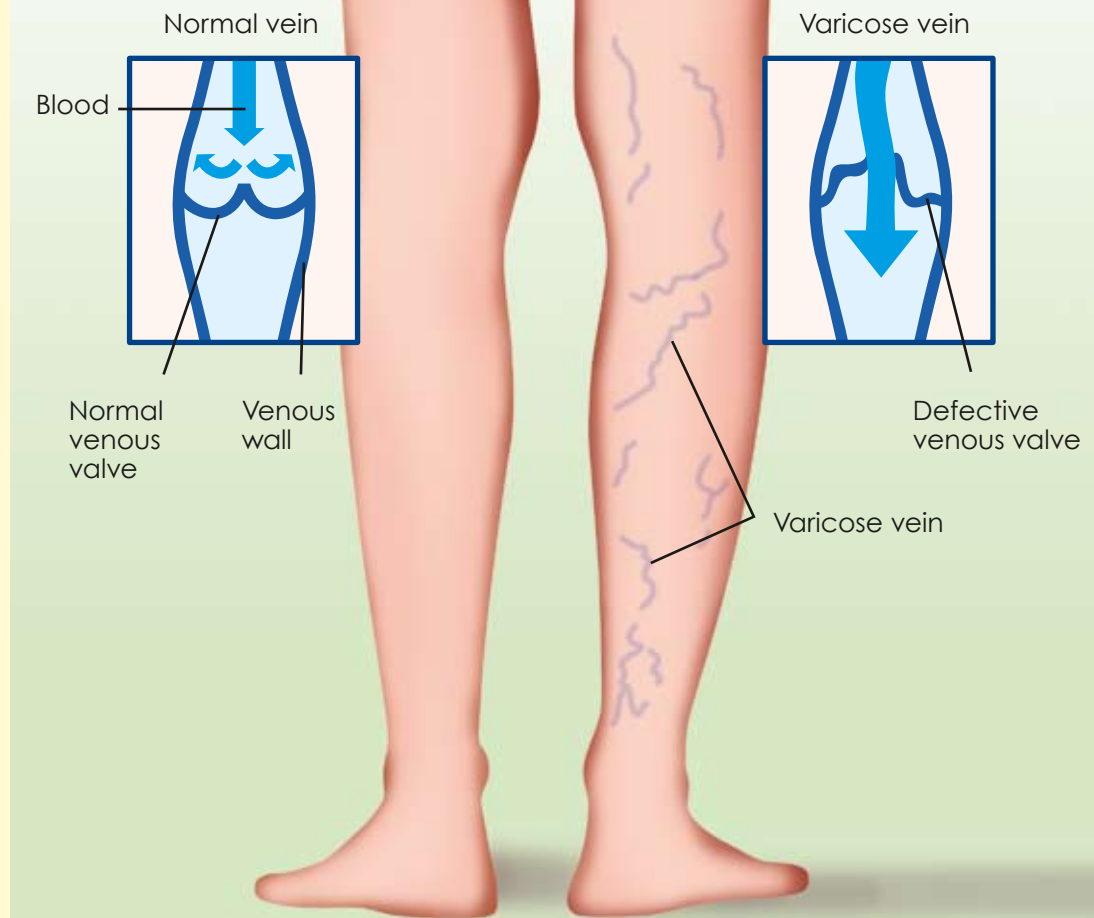
Information on the services offered by the Labour Department and on major labour legislation can also be found on our website <http://www.labour.gov.hk>.

Information on the services provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Council can be obtained through its hotline 2739 9000 and website <http://www.oshc.org.hk>.

Complaints

If you have any complaints about unsafe workplace and practices, please call the Labour Department's Occupational Safety and Health Complaint Hotline at 2542 2172. All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Work-related disease series Lower Limb Varicose Vein



Introduction



Work and health are closely related.

While our work could affect our health, our health could also affect our work.

According to the International Labour Organization, the relationship between work and disease can be classified into the following three categories:

(1) Occupational diseases – have specific or strong relationship to the exposure to physical, chemical, biological or psychosocial factors in the workplace. These factors in the work environment are predominant and essential in the causation of the diseases, for example, silicosis, asbestosis, occupational deafness, etc.

(2) Work-related diseases – are multifactorial in origin, where factors in the work environment may play a role, together with other risk factors, in the development of such diseases, for example, plantar fasciitis, lower limb varicose vein, frozen shoulder, etc.

(3) General diseases – are diseases affecting the working population. They do not have causal relationship with work but may be aggravated by occupational health hazards, for example, diabetes mellitus, gout, rheumatoid arthritis, etc.

This pamphlet introduces lower limb varicose vein which is a common "work-related disease".

What is lower limb varicose vein?

It presents as dilated, tortuous and swollen veins over the lower limbs. It is mainly due to defective function of the valves of the veins or intrinsic weakness of the venous wall.

Causes

- Personal factors e.g. pregnancy, overweight, gender (more common in female)
- Family history of varicose veins
- Prolonged standing or sitting that increases the venous pressure in the lower limbs
- Other factors e.g. as a complication of thrombophlebitis of the lower limbs



Symptoms and signs

- Dilated veins over the lower limbs without any symptom initially
- Skin itchiness of the affected area, heavy sensation and dull ache of the affected leg, ankle swelling
- Complications such as eczema, bleeding and ulceration in the affected area in severe cases

Which occupations have a higher risk?

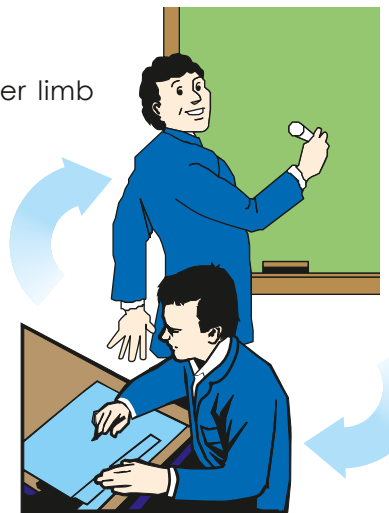
Sales personnel, cook, teacher and nurse etc.



How to prevent it?

1. Avoid standing or sitting for a prolonged period of time

- Sit for a while and perform some lower limb exercises after prolonged standing
- Move around after prolonged sitting or standing in order to enhance venous blood return from the lower limbs



2. Reduce pressure in the lower limbs

- Maintain appropriate body weight
- If your work requires prolonged standing, shift your weight from one leg to the other from time to time, or rest your legs alternately on a stool
- Use of antifatigue mat



3. Suitable exercises

First Series

- (1) Sit properly with your feet on the floor. Straighten your right leg and keep it at the horizontal level. Move the right foot back and forth 5 times
- (2) Repeat the above movements with the left leg



Second Series

- (1) Raise one leg while sitting. Rotate your foot outward 10 times
- (2) Then rotate your foot inward 10 times
- (3) Repeat the above movements with the other leg

