



## **RADIOFREQUENCY ABLATION (RFA) - PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS**

### **About your procedure:**

- RFA consists of inserting an FDA approved catheter into the affected vein under ultrasound guidance.
- A small lidocaine injection will be used to start an IV in the treated vein.
- 4-6 more numbing injections will surround the vein to protect it from the heat.
- Radiofrequency energy (heat) ablates the target vein by shrinking, collapsing, and sealing it shut.
- Closure reroutes blood to healthy veins, improving circulation.

### **Before your procedure:**

- Shower and avoid applying lotion to treatment areas before arrival.
- Wear loose clothing/footwear. Bring compression stockings.
- Eat a healthy meal, hydrate, and minimize caffeine.

### **After your procedure:**

- Wear the compression (bandage or stocking) for 24 hours.
- Leave any steri-strips in place for 4 days or until they come off on their own.
- Walking is encouraged. Walk daily for 10-20 minutes until your follow up appointment.
- There are no restrictions on normal activities of daily life.
- No strenuous exercise or lifting for 5 days post-procedure.
- Light or moderate exercise and lifting are permitted immediately post-procedure.
- Elevate legs 5-10 minutes every 1-2 hours.
- You may shower the day after your procedure.
- Avoid flying and long car trips for one week post-procedure. Discuss travel plans with your provider.
- Avoid swimming or prolonged leg submersion for 3 days.

### **What to expect following your procedure:**

- Bruising, tenderness, and mild-to-moderate soreness are common post-procedure. Apply Arnica lotion to minimize bruising and manage skin pigmentation.
- Treated veins may occasionally become hardened, inflamed, or red (phlebitis). Though painful, this is normal.
- Treat with warm compresses, OTC pain relievers, and comfortable compression.
- Tylenol and Ibuprofen may be used for pain or discomfort.
- A "tightness" sensation, similar to muscle soreness, may occur 1–2 weeks post-procedure.

- Numbness localized to the treatment area may occur due to nerve irritation from the heat treatment. This will gradually resolve during the healing process.
- Schedule an ultrasound about 1 week after your final procedure.