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Not In Vein

by Delia von Neuschatz

The quest for youth and beauty leaves no stone, or rather, vein unturned. Bulging varicose veins have been effectively dispatched for years with various treatments including phlebectomy, sclerotherapy and more recently, Endovenous Laser Ablation (EVLA, aka Endovenous Laser Treatment or EVLT). But, it's not just unsightly leg veins which are being banished from view. Spider veins, blue veins, cherry angiomas — all manner of unsightly venous displays — are being eradicated from head to toe in an effort to achieve the smooth, unblemished skin of bygone years. Today, there's no body part that can't be treated — not the hands, not the chest, not even the eyelids.

"Eliminating visible veins on the face, breast and hands is becoming fashionable," states pioneering vein specialist, **Dr. Luis Navarro**. "Veins in those areas usually are not varicose veins. They are normal veins which, because of the aging process, have lost subcutaneous fat, elasticity and water content." The effects of gravity take their toll too. Fortunately, these areas respond well to treatment, generally requiring only one to three sessions. Results are good because the veins there don't carry as much pressure as the veins in the legs.



Bulging hand veins are not diseased like varicose veins. Nor do they necessarily become larger with age. Their prominence is due to the fact that as we age, the fatty tissue surrounding them disappears and the skin becomes thinner. Their elimination via sclerotherapy treatment is permanent.

Hands

Bulging, age-betraying hand veins are usually treated with sclerotherapy, also known as injection therapy. Sclerotherapy involves the injection of a chemical liquid or foam directly into the vein to shut it down permanently. The closed vein is eventually absorbed by the body, explains **Dr. David Fox**, a board-certified vascular surgeon. The results are permanent. Because hand veins are not diseased, like varicose veins, the likelihood of new veins developing in the hand is very low. Would the removal of veins compromise the circulation of the hand, however? No, reassures Dr. Fox. "There are many more blood vessels in the deeper layers of the hand that provide adequate blood flow. The bulging hand veins are superficial and not required for normal circulation."



BEFORE:
Left Hand with bulging veins.

AFTER:
Left Hand after Sclerotherapy.

Face

When it comes to veins on the face, including the cheeks, nose and eye area, there are essentially two treatments — sclerotherapy and laser. Injections have better results according to Dr. Navarro, unless the veins are especially tiny and widespread. Then, laser becomes the more effective treatment. It is important to keep in mind, however, that a laser's efficiency decreases with a vein's depth. The deeper the vein, the less effective the laser therapy.



Founder of Manhattan's [Fox Vein Care](#) center, David Fox, MD, FACS is a board-certified vascular surgeon specializing in the treatment of venous disease. On the removal of veins, Dr. Fox says: "It's important to realize that the venous system is really a network with a lot of redundancy in it. So, if we close off or remove certain parts of the venous system, the blood is going to immediately and automatically re-direct to other parts of the venous system. Treatment of the faulty veins almost always results in improved blood flow in the overall vein system."