

# VEIN HEALTH

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## Q&A on Vein Symptoms

with Dr. Jonie Hines,  
*Board Certified Family Practitioner*

### **“My legs are heavy and tired at the end of the day....could it be my veins?”**

The answer is yes. Chronic venous disease or veins that are not working properly can cause your legs to feel heavy and or tired at the end of the day. Days when a person stands or sits for periods of time these symptoms may be worse. In addition, traveling or riding in a vehicle may be particularly uncomfortable for patients with venous disease. Chronic venous disease is the most common etiology for legs that are tired, heavy, fatigued and swollen. Other causes of tired/heavy/fatigued legs include peripheral artery disease, diabetes, anemia, medications and various neurologic conditions including but not limited to Parkinson disease, ALS, MS and Myasthenia Gravis.

### **“What are some other symptoms of my veins having problems?”**

Veins that are not working properly can result in many symptoms in the lower legs, all of which are worse later in the day. The symptoms including leg aching, throbbing, itching, burning, restlessness, cramps and/or Charlie horses. In addition, folks with venous disease can have leg swelling, darkening of the skin and slow healing sores on their legs called ulcers.

### **“Shouldn't I be able to see if I have vein problems?”**

Not always. Although many patients with venous disease do have visible varicose veins (large rope-like veins) or spider veins, many patients don't have any visible signs of vein problems, only symptoms. The only way to tell is to

do a detailed ultrasound of a person's legs called a “Vein Mapping” at a vein clinic.

### **“What exactly is Chronic Venous Disease?”**

Veins are designed to provide a pathway for blood to get back to your heart from other parts of your body. The network of veins keeps the blood going in the correct direction with one-way valves. For a variety of reasons, veins can stretch and the valves can fail. The end result is blood flowing in the wrong direction leading to the above symptoms and signs and is referred to as “Chronic Venous Disease” or “Venous Insufficiency”.

### **“Can I do something about my veins?”**

Yes! There are many outpatient, minimally invasive procedures available now to treat Chronic Venous Disease. It is extremely rare for patients with venous disease to have to go through a vein stripping surgery. Almost all patients are now treated in a clinic setting and they are walking on a treadmill before they leave the building without the need for pain medications or significant restrictions on their daily activities. Almost all procedures performed on patients because of symptoms are considered medically necessary procedures and are covered by most health insurance plans. In addition, staying active, avoiding sitting or standing for long periods of time, maintaining a healthy weight and wearing graduated compression stockings may help with some of the symptoms of Chronic Venous Disease.

For additional information on Chronic Venous Disease and Vein treatments, please visit [www.rockymountainveinclinic.com](http://www.rockymountainveinclinic.com).

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