

# More Than Cosmetic

TRADITIONALLY SEEN AS A VANITY ISSUE, VARICOSE VEIN DISEASE COMES WITH UNCOMFORTABLE SYMPTOMS THAT CAN NOW BE MEDICALLY TREATED

By Deborah Rutledge

**D**r. Darren Hurst would like people to know that varicose vein disease is a not a vain disease.

"It is a real disease that causes real problems for patients," says Hurst, the founder and director of Vascular and Interventional Associates, a part of the Radiology Associates of Northern Kentucky. "And now, there are real solutions for the treatment of symptomatic varicose veins in the form of minimally invasive, image-guided therapies at the VIA Vein Center."

Varicose vein disease and disorders of the superficial venous system also are extremely common, with up to 60 percent of the adult population estimated to suffer from symptoms related to this disease.

But while many patients consider varicose veins to be a normal function of aging, they should be thought of as a medical disease, and one with significant impact on a person's lifestyle, he says.

"Most people don't realize that their symptoms of leg pain, dry skin, itching and heaviness are related to their varicose veins—restless legs, as well," Hurst says.

With varicose veins, "patients are limited in many ways—they are embarrassed by how their legs look. They can't wear dresses or shorts. They can't go to the pool or beach. They have pain that limits their ability to exercise or walk, shop, play with their kids," Hurst says.

Certain factors, like aging, may contribute to the severity of varicose veins, which are four to eight times more common in women than in men, he adds. Other factors include prolonged standing, obesity and prior leg trauma.

"In the past, conservative measures such as compression stockings and behavior



The Vascular and Interventional Associates Vein Center provides many types of treatments, including surgery.

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modification offered patients very little lasting relief of their symptoms, and surgical stripping was considered too invasive and painful for the treatment of most vein disease," Hurst says. "However, the vascular specialists at Vascular and Interventional Associates Vein Center can now offer new minimally invasive treatments that are relatively painless and safe and are a pleasing solution to patient's vein problems."

There have been many advances in the treatment of this disease, which is why

vascular specialists at VIA Vein Center now may offer image-guided treatments such as endovenous laser ablation, ultrasound-guided foam sclerotherapy, ambulatory phlebectomy, and conventional sclerotherapy.

"Often, a combination of the above therapies are necessary for complete treatment of the disease," he says.

And, unlike before, insurance companies are now covering these therapies for treatment of the symptomatic disease. ■