

Study finds sclerotherapy can be successfully used by patients of all skin types, ethnic backgrounds

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Chronic venous insufficiency (CVI), which impacts more than 25 million people, includes varicose and spider veins. They occur when the veins become damaged and can't work as they should.

Treatments include sclerotherapy, which involves injecting a chemical solution directly into the varicose or spider vein which causes the vein walls to swell, stick together and seal shut, stopping the flow of blood. As a result, the vein fades within a few weeks. However, a [side effect](#) includes darkened skin in the treated area.

A new study from Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine has found that while post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation is experienced more in [people of color](#) following sclerotherapy, the treatment, when done properly, is safe in patients of all skin types. The findings are [published](#) in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*.

"There continues to be a paucity of data regarding best treatment practices in skin of color patients. This study seeks to highlight that sclerotherapy treatments are safe and effective in patients with skin of color when conducted by trained professionals," explained corresponding author Neelam Vashi, MD, associate professor of dermatology at the school and director of the Boston University Cosmetic and Laser Center at Boston Medical Center (BMC).

The researchers reviewed all patients treated with sclerotherapy at BMC over an eight-year interval. They then evaluated outcomes, side effects and body locations to assess for differences between subgroups.

"Our data highlights that sclerotherapy is safe in populations with skin of color, though they do experience post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH) at a higher rate as compared to those with lighter skin tones," says Vashi.

According to the researchers, this study helps inform patients of the common adverse events that can occur with sclerotherapy [treatment](#) in all skin types. Additionally, it highlights common indications for sclerotherapy.

"By 2040 the majority of the United States population will identify as a race other than non-Hispanic white. Therefore, treatments ought to be studied in all skin types to ensure the best [outcomes](#) in all patients. Our study highlights that with the correct training, sclerotherapy is safe and effective in patients of all skin types," the researchers conclude.

More information: Michelle Lazar et al, Side Effect Profile and Expectations with Sclerotherapy Across Fitzpatrick Skin Types, *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology* (2024). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jaad.2024.06.095](#)

Provided by Boston University School of Medicine

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