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Varicose Veins

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

NRS
DATE INITIAL**I. The client/caregiver has a basic knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the vascular system.**

- A. Arteries carry blood away from the heart while veins carry blood to the heart.
- B. Veins have a series of valves that allow blood to be carried against gravity and prevent a backflow of blood.

II. The client/caregiver can define varicose veins.

- A. Varicose veins are abnormally dilated veins that may twist and turn.
- B. They are caused by valves in the veins that stretch and weaken, causing blood to pool in the lower extremities.
- C. Varicose veins can occur in legs, esophagus, or rectal area.

III. The client/caregiver can list factors that may increase risk.

- A. Congenital weakness of vein structure
- B. Obesity
- C. Pregnancy
- D. Constrictive clothing
- E. Prolonged periods of sitting
- F. Venous obstruction (blood clots, tumors, etc.)
- G. Advanced age

IV. The client/caregiver can recognize signs and symptoms.

- A. Enlarged, twisted veins that appear under the skin as dark blue or purple
- B. Leg pain, especially after long periods of sitting
- C. Swelling of feet, ankles, and legs
- D. Complaint of legs feeling heavy or tired
- E. Area with impaired circulation may appear darker than surrounding skin

NRS
DATE INITIAL**V. The client/caregiver can list measures to prevent or manage varicose veins.**

- A. Avoid sitting or standing for long periods of time. Do not cross legs at the knee.
- B. Avoid injury to extremities.
- C. Avoid constrictive clothing.
- D. Have frequent rest periods with feet elevated.
- E. Exercise regularly such as swimming or walking.
- F. Wear elastic support hose. Demonstrate how to apply and remove support hose.
- G. Proper foot and nail care. Report any open areas.
- H. Lose weight if overweight (refer to weight-reduction diet teaching guide).
- I. Avoid smoking (refer to tobacco abuse teaching guide).

VI. The client/caregiver can list treatments available if the above measures are not sufficient.

- A. Surgery includes vein ligation or vein stripping.
- B. Sclerotherapy uses a clotting solution, which is injected into vein, which closes it off.
- C. Endovenous ablation therapy uses laser energy to cauterize the vein.

VII. The client/caregiver is aware of possible complications.

- A. Superficial thrombophlebitis
- B. Rupture
- C. Venous stasis ulcers
- D. Cellulitis

RESOURCES

Vein clinics

Registered dietician for weight loss

(Continued)

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