

## **Varicose Veins Information**

Varicose veins are blood vessels that have become enlarged and elongated. They can be painful and in the worst cases contribute to ulceration in the legs. They occur most frequently in the lower legs but can also occur in the thigh and the groin. They occur because of damage or failure to the one-way valves inside the veins which allows blood to flow in the wrong direction down the vein. This causes an increase in pressure within the vein and the vein to enlarge.

### **Causes of varicose veins**

1. Pregnancy
2. Injury to the veins
3. Weight gain
4. Inactivity / immobility
5. Long periods of standing
6. Hormonal factors

### **Investigation of Varicose Veins**

In the first case an ultrasound of your legs is used to investigate your veins and their function. Sometimes an ultrasound of you abdomen may be required, and rarely another form of imaging such as a CT scan may be required.