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Local spotlight

Vein therapist expands to meet rising demand

Growing popularity of laser treatments spurs new office in Novi, plans for a second facility.

Karen Dybis / Special to The Detroit News

Attention, men. Those lumpy, bumpy varicose and spider veins are not manly or handsome. They are signs of a medical problem that could be treated quickly and relatively inexpensively.

And the best part of today's laser treatments are patients -- male and female -- are typically up and running the same day of the procedure, said Jeffrey H. Miller, founder and head of Advanced Vein Therapies.

Miller is a phlebologist, a doctor that specializes in veins and vein disease. In fact, his business is

doing so well that he recently moved his medical office from Livonia to a new, larger space in Novi, nearly doubling his practice.

In fact, Miller is actively looking for space in the Troy and Birmingham areas to open a second office. He also expects in the next year to add staff to handle the increased patient load he is seeing.



"We've been continuously growing since I opened Advanced Vein Therapies in 2006. Nowadays, people want to see specialists, and (veins) are all we do, all day every day," said Dr. Jeffrey H. Miller. (Velvet S. McNeil / The Detroit News)

He credits the boost in business to his staff of six's dedication to ensuring patients are treated in a timely fashion and walk out healthy and happy.

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Cosmetic procedures -- like those to treat spider veins -- are generally on the rise, said the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery. The trade group in Rolling Meadows, Ill., said a survey showed 37 percent of its members said their use of laser-related procedures had increased compared to six months ago.

"These findings indicate that patients investing in the health and beauty of their skin are still a priority during unsteady economic times," said Darrell Rigel, M.D., president of the A.S.D.S.

Miller also is an interventional radiologist, a medical specialty that uses technology and imaging to guide the doctor. The result is minimally invasive surgeries, which makes recovery time much faster,



Miller said.

Miller has nearly doubled his practice in relocating to Novi. He aims to give the office a spa-like feel. (Velvet S. McNeil / The Detroit News)

Previous to opening

Advance Vein Therapies,

Miller worked as director of the Vascular and Interventional Radiology Department at Oakwood Hospital and Medical Center in Dearborn. It was there that he realized the need for out-patient services for veins and venous diseases.

But there were some challenges. People still have many misconceptions about

today's treatments, Miller said, and some worry that the previously popular procedure of "stripping" the vein is still in use.

With the new technologies available, patients are starting to understand there are innovative ways to treat vein disease, Miller said. Everything is laser guided, broadly known as vein ablation treatment. Scarring is minimal or non-existent, the procedure generally takes less than an hour and it offers immediate relief.

Miller also made his workplace feel more like a spa than the typical medical office. The goal is to make patients feel comfortable so they go into the procedure in the best possible mind-set, he said.

The spa-like environment also is appealing to his patients, who are mostly female. Typically, he sees women who are more than 35 years old, but patient ages can run from as young as 20 to those in their 80s, Miller said.

Patients can come directly to the office or be referred through their physician. But male patients tend to come at the direction of their wives, Miller noted.

"A lot of men have the problem, but they just don't seek treatment," Miller said. "They see it as a cosmetic problem. But many patients with varicose veins also will have other symptoms such as aching, pain, fatigue or swelling."

Karen Dybis is a Metro Detroit free-lance writer.

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