

# Legs Ache?

Diane confides that her career involves a lot of walking, lifting, and driving: "Since my procedure, my legs are no longer swollen, I have no more pain, and I can finally get a good night's sleep."



PHOTO BY AMANDA SMITH

**There's more to deep vein insufficiency than meets the eye. Venous insufficiency can cause a myriad of symptoms, including extreme urination frequency, leg ulcers, or swelling, thickening, and discoloration of the skin, all of which can occur with or without protruding varicose veins.**

For eight years, Diane Martin never slept for over two hours at a time.

"I would have to get up and go to the bathroom to urinate," she remembers. "Every time I got up in the middle of the night, I used to write it down. It was just like clockwork, and it was exhausting. I never got a restful sleep."

"I went to a urologist and was checked for problems like infection and cancer of the bladder. They could find nothing, so I figured I'd just have to live with it."

Diane confides that, along with her frequent urination, her legs were very achy and swollen: "Then one day while I was at my primary care physician's office, I drew it to her attention. She referred me to Dr. Magnant."

Joseph G. Magnant, MD, FACS, is a board-certified vascular surgeon and vein expert whose practice, Vein Specialists at Royal Palm Square, is 100% dedicated to the modern evaluation and treatment of leg vein disorders.

"It's a very pleasant office," describes Diane. "It's like a spa atmosphere; it makes you feel very comfortable and it really stands out. Dr. Magnant really got my attention when he was going through a list of symptoms and asked if I used the restroom a lot during the night."

"I said, *Oh my gosh, I do*, and it wasn't just at night. With my job, I'm running all day long between hospitals and physicians' offices, and the first thing I would do at each location was to find a restroom."

"Once Dr. Magnant asked me about it, I was very excited. I returned for a full ultrasound on each leg. The vascular technologist, J.T., was very informative. He showed me that my veins were leaking severely in both legs, which I never suspected because I didn't have any bulging, ropey veins."



JOSEPH G. MAGNANT, MD, FACS

## More than varicose veins

"There are many different presentations of venous insufficiency other than just varicose veins," explains Dr. Magnant.

*Venous insufficiency* is defined as the condition in which the valves of the deep and/or superficial veins of the lower extremities no longer function properly in a one-way manner. These valves are either stuck or scarred in the open position, or are floppy and continue to open, or *prolapse*, beyond the closed position. This results in reflux or backward blood flow in the veins, which produces increased hydrostatic pressure in the downstream venous system.

"Some patients have swollen feet and ankles, achy legs, leg ulcers, persistent itching over the affected area [see sidebar], extreme urinary frequency, as in Diane's case, or a feeling of tiredness, especially at the end of the day," says Dr. Magnant. "Several of my patients also describe restlessness in the affected leg during the night, which often subsides once the underlying leaky veins are treated."

"We rely heavily on ultrasound evaluation of our patients' veins. An ultrasound evaluation can determine whether or not there are any problems in the saphenous

veins or deeper veins. If we find leaky veins, we can perform an endovenous closure procedure, or 'sealing' procedure to cure the problem, which is usually covered by insurance."

*Endovenous closure* is an in-office procedure which involves placing a thin catheter into the faulty vein and then delivering heat energy to the vein wall, causing it to seal shut. There is no future danger in collapsing the treated vein because it wasn't working properly anyway and other veins have already compensated for the fact that it was not working properly.

"I was a little nervous about having the procedure," admits Diane, "but it was really painless."

Diane says that the procedure was incredibly affordable: "My only charge was an office visit co-pay."

"I now sleep for six hours straight, and I'm a different person. I'm so rested. And there's no pain, which is awesome."

"For years, my legs resembled stovepipes. Now, they look totally normal."

FHCN—Kris Kline

# Don't Wait

Patients with any of the following symptoms might benefit from a thorough venous insufficiency evaluation, including a diagnostic ultrasound, by Vein Specialists at Royal Palm Square:

- Swollen, achy legs
- Restless leg syndrome
- Bulging varicose veins
- Bleeding from spider or varicose veins
- Extreme urination frequency
- Impending or open leg ulcers
- Night-time leg cramps
- Thickening and discoloration of skin of the ankles or legs

## Different Symptoms, Same Diagnosis

Thirty-six-year-old Roger Theis says that even at 13 years of age, his lower legs began developing blisters.

"I couldn't figure out why," he admits. "They would itch, I'd scratch them, and they would pop. Then it would take months and months for them to heal."

Roger says that the skin on his legs was thickened and visibly red: "They also retained water like crazy, and although I sought the help of different physicians, no one had any idea what was causing my symptoms. I even had a deep vein thrombosis [blood clot] at the age of twenty-two and although I was in the hospital with it for a few days, no one bothered to consider my other symptoms."

"Then about two years ago, I mentioned my symptoms to my primary care physician, and he referred me to Dr. Magnant."

Roger confides that he didn't hold out much hope of an answer, but he did schedule an appointment: "I couldn't believe it when the doctor said he knew exactly what the problem was. To this point, I had seen several physicians, but no one knew what was going on."

"Dr. Magnant was different. He diagnosed my problem, knew the right course of action to take, weaved me through the insurance paperwork, and resolved my leaky veins."

The doctor performed endovenous closure on Roger's left leg on January 6, 2010, and on his right leg on February 3.

"Each treatment took only about forty-five minutes; by the time I figured out what was going on, it was over," notes Roger with a laugh. "I was awake during the entire procedure."

"As a nurse, I do a lot of walking, bending, and sitting on the floor to help my elderly patients, and when I'm not doing that, I'm a stump grinder, which means that once a tree is cut down, I grind its stump to sawdust."

"This vein procedure will enable me to stay on my feet for longer periods of time, and now, if I do get a blister, it heals in a week rather than the ten months that it took before."

"I think sometimes men don't take advantage of something like this because, one, they don't think they have a problem, or two, they are not sure what the outcome will be, and I admit I was skeptical myself."

"But there's nothing to be scared of; the whole experience has been incredibly rewarding. Two days after I had my left leg done, I was out grinding stumps again, and my leg felt more alive than it had in several years. It was great."



PHOTO COURTESY OF VEIN SPECIALISTS



**Joseph G. Magnant, MD, FACS**, is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and is board certified by the American Board of Surgery in vascular surgery. He earned his medical degree from Medical College of Virginia. He completed a general surgery residency at Medical College of Virginia Hospitals and a fellowship in vascular surgery at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Lebanon, NH. Dr. Magnant of Vein Specialists at Royal Palm Square focuses exclusively on vein

evaluation and modern treatments in a dedicated, outpatient vein-centered facility. Dr. Magnant is an active member of the American College of Phlebology, Society for Vascular Surgery, and Southern Association of Vascular Surgery.

## Smooth out your problem veins

Dr. Magnant welcomes all calls regarding this article as well as other topics related to veins. His office is located at **1510 Royal Palm Square Blvd., Suite 101**, in Fort Myers. Please phone **(239) 694-VEIN (8346)** for more information or to schedule an appointment. Visit his website [WEKNOWVEINS.COM](http://WEKNOWVEINS.COM) or email him at [info@weknowveins.com](mailto:info@weknowveins.com).

Visit Vein Specialists at Royal Palm Square's newly revised website at [www.weknowveins.com](http://www.weknowveins.com).