

## Choosing Treatment for Spider Veins

### ■ How to Find a Plastic Surgeon

If you're considering having your spider veins treated, you may wonder how to find a qualified physician. While there's no perfect formula, here are a few factors to consider before making your decision.

**Check credentials**—Make sure your doctor has the appropriate training and qualifications. Surgeons, dermatologists, radiologists and family physicians can be educated to treat vein problems. Look for a doctor who is certified by a specialty recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties ([www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org)), says plastic surgeon Robert Murphy Jr., M.D., of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network. Examples are the American Board of Plastic Surgery ([www.abplsurg.org](http://www.abplsurg.org)) or the American Board of Dermatology ([www.abderm.org](http://www.abderm.org)). (To verify certification, visit the above Web sites.)

**Look at experience level.** You want someone with a lot of experience doing the procedure you're having done. Ask the doctor (or doctor's staff) how many times he or she has performed this procedure and how often. The more experience the better.

**Check hospital affiliation.** It's worth the extra effort to make sure your doctor is associated with a hospital. There are certain training requirements and standards hospital staff have to meet. And if a problem does arise, a hospital-affiliated physician will have the resources in place to help you.

**Get referrals from trusted sources.** These might include:

- Your family physician
- A physician referral line from a hospital recognized for its excellence
- Friends, relatives or contacts who've had firsthand experience with a particular doctor or know of his/her reputation

**Trust your instincts.** Schedule a consultation with your prospective doctor and pay attention to your comfort level with him or her. You want someone you can communicate with. If you feel brushed off, ignored or intimidated, keep looking.



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