

Spider veins

The solution **Microsclerotherapy** works to rid legs of the unsightly thread veins that make miniskirts history. Small injections of a sclerosant, a type of detergent (think of it as a medical-grade washing-up liquid), cause the vein to swell and flush the blood out.

Pain factor The injections contain a built-in anaesthetic so it doesn't sting. Our tester rated it on a par with going to the hygienist – not pleasant but worth the result.

Downtime This is a walk-in, walk-out procedure but you should avoid aspirin > < and vigorous exercise for about a week afterwards. Fashion-conscious girls take note – you have to wear compression stockings day and night for two weeks after treatment. These sometimes feel itchy so it's probably best not to have this done in the summer. Mr Whiteley also insists on a follow-up visit a month later to check for staining (a rare condition where the blood pools in the vein). He corrects this with a small pinprick to squeeze out the excess blood so the vein heals properly.

Who to see Mark Whiteley at the Whiteley Clinic (tel: 01483 477180; thewhiteleyclinic.co.uk). Treatments cost from £285 for the first session and £268 for follow-ups. Some thread veins may be caused by underlying reflux veins that can only be diagnosed with an ultrasound scan, which costs £349.

Results 10/10. For about a month after the microsclerotherapy the vein darkens, but then it begins to fade – expect to see the full result about six months later. Our tester's thighs were restored to blemish-free creaminess.



BEST FOR LEGS

Mark Whiteley

The go-to guy for vein-free legs, Whiteley was one of the first surgeons to bring pinhole surgery using lasers and radiofrequency to this country. He can also claim to be the co-inventor of TRLOP (Trans-Luminal Occlusion of Perforators), a procedure that closes veins with a heated catheter. With his methods, lumps stay flattened, whereas traditional vein-stripping can lead to their growing back in a year. He is very thorough. He says nine out of 10 thread veins have underlying varicosity – which may not be visible to the naked eye – so he scans legs with an ultrasound to check for this: most other practices don't. Based at his clinic in Guildford, he also visits London once a week to see patients on Harley Street. **Consultation, £162; thread-vein treatments, from £285. Ring 01483 477180 or visit markwhiteley.co.uk.**

Sagging skin

The solution **Thermage CPT** is a skin tightening treatment that uses radiofrequency waves to heat collagen at deeper levels of the skin. Think of it as a mattress and collagen is the springs. It has been used to give a lift to the face, neck and chest. A reputation for being overpriced, but the latest model has a new video handset that makes it far more visible and also delivers the tightening result. It can be used on all sorts of areas, from turkey necks and legs to jolly-like thighs, stomachs and buttocks.

Pain factor Some people compare it to the hot Thermage to the skin machine, vigorously massaging the skin to keep the pain manageable.

Downtime None. The treatment gives a subtle pink flush, like the kind you feel after you've done a vigorous workout.

Who to see Dr Tracy Mountford at Cosmetic Skin Clinic (tel: 01253 610000; cosmetic-skin-clinic.com). Treatments cost from £1750.

Results 7/10. This works best on people with a good skin tone. If you are thin with a good skin tone, you will see the most improvement.

Dai Davies Davies is a plastic surgeon who has been working in the field for over 20 years. He is a member of the British Society of Plastic Surgeons and the British Association of Plastic Surgeons. He has performed over 10,000 operations and has a reputation for being a very thorough surgeon. He is also a very experienced lecturer and has given many talks at medical conferences. He is a very popular surgeon and has a long waiting list of patients. He is a very experienced surgeon and has a long waiting list of patients. He is a very experienced surgeon and has a long waiting list of patients.

Jesper Sorensen Based at the Cadogan Clinic in Chelsea, Sorensen has a very high-precision approach. He specialises in endoscopic techniques and fat grafting and has also been performing microsurgery since 1992, using it for tricky eyelid procedures and to repair facial nerve injuries. One of his techniques is a high-powered loop for operating on the nerves and blood vessels. He has designed his own set of surgical tools with which to perform intricate facelifts. **Consultation, from £250, facelift, from £1,000. Ring 020 7600 4444 or visit drjesper.com.**

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THE HOME OF KEYHOLE VARICOSE VEIN SURGERY

THE BODY
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The dreaded itzy-bitsy spider veins