

Telemedicine consultations: information for patients

In response to the changes to daily routines that are now required as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, Mr Woodburn is now offering remote telemedicine consultations at the Cornwall Vein Clinic. This will mean that patients can still see a specialist and discuss their condition and potential treatment options with them, without having to leave their home.

While attendance at the Duchy Hospital Ambulatory Unit (ACU) will still be required to undergo any treatment that you decide to have for your condition, we have altered our patient pathway so that this will be the only hospital visit required. Your treatment will take place in an environment that has been redesigned to reduce your person-to-person contact, and all the precautions required to reduce your risk of coming in to contact with Coronavirus will be in place.

With these measures we hope that we can continue to provide our usual high-quality expert services for varicose veins and other conditions, in a manner that maintains patient safety.

How are you able to assess my condition without seeing me in person?

As a Consultant who has over 30 years of assessing and treating patients with varicose veins and other vascular conditions, Mr Woodburn is one of the most experienced specialists in the UK. This means that he can usually assess and diagnose varicose vein conditions by asking certain questions and by looking at the affected limb(s) - this can all be carried out by a remote telemedicine consultation over computer, tablet, or mobile phone. This remote consultation will enable Mr Woodburn to give you a good idea about your diagnosis and possible treatment options for your veins, enabling you to decide how you wish to proceed.

How do I arrange a Telemedicine appointment?

To arrange a consultation by telemedicine, or in person, please contact the practice administration team on 01872 308520, and they will advise you of potential dates and times for a consultation. ***Please tell the practice team if you would like a remote telemedicine consultation.***

What do I need to have a telemedicine consultation?

It should be possible to carry out a telemedicine consultation if you have :

1. A decent Internet connection (Fibre, Cable, 5G, 4G, 3G, or ADSL2+)
2. Any mobile phone, tablet, or computer (with a webcam and microphone)
3. Your web browser - the latest version of Safari, Chrome, Firefox or Edge

Provided that your mobile phone reception or broadband connection is adequate you will be able to see and hear the consultant, and communicate with them as though you were in the out-patient clinic face-to-face.

The communication takes place across a secure and encrypted peer-to-peer link that meets all UK data protection requirements for healthcare, unlike systems such as FaceTime and WhatsApp which may not always be compliant with UK data protection.

What will happen during the consultation?

Once your appointment has been arranged you will receive a link to the appointment by email or text message. When you click on the link the Consultant will see that you are waiting for your consultation, and will then connect to your phone or computer to start the consultation. You should be able to see and hear the consultant in the same as you would with any other video calling facility, such as FaceTime or Skype.

You will be asked a number of questions relating to your condition and your medical history and medications. **You will need to be able to stand up at some point in the consultation to show the consultant your varicose veins.** You may need to reposition your phone or computer, or ask someone at home to assist you, so that this is possible.

Providing that an adequate view of your veins has been obtained the consultant will then tell you their opinion regarding your veins, what is likely to be required to treat them, the potential cost of treatment, and answer any questions that you may have.

What will happen after the consultation?

After the consultation we will send a letter to you and your GP with a summary of the consultation and any plans for treatment. We will also email or post the information leaflets about any proposed treatment directly to you.

If you decide to have treatment, arrangements will be made for you to come in to the Duchy Hospital Ambulatory Care Unit for your treatment. Before finalising your treatment you will undergo an ultrasound scan of your veins (this is normally done at your consultation if you are seen in the out-patient clinic), to confirm that your proposed treatment is correct, and to identify and discuss any modifications to this plan that may be required to ensure the best outcome for you.

Your treatment will then be carried out under local anaesthetic and after a brief recovery period you will be allowed to leave the hospital, having been supplied with a post-operative instruction leaflet by a member of staff.

You will have a follow-up telemedicine consultation around 6-8 weeks after your treatment, or sooner if required. The cost of this follow-up appointment is included in the fee you that you pay to the Duchy Hospital for your procedure, if you are not using private health insurance to pay for your treatment.

How much does it cost?

Telemedicine consultation fee	£75
pre-treatment ultrasound scan (on day of procedure)	£100
Varicose vein treatment fee (paid to Duchy hospital)	varies by procedure, see "fees" page at www.Cornwallveinclinic.com