

Varicose veins: not just a cosmetic problem

Run time - :31

ANCHOR LEDE:

Varicose (VARE-ah-cose) veins are a common problem. But OSF HealthCare surgeon Doctor Greg Ward says many don't want to talk about it because they don't know about the range of treatment. Tim Ditman of OSF has more.

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Varicose veins pop up when one-way valves in the vein become weakened or damaged, causing blood to collect in the vein. They may cause your legs to ache.

An ultrasound will help decide treatment, which could include support hose or an injection. For bigger veins, a provider may do a laser ablation (ah-BLAY-zhun) procedure to close the leak.

**\*\*\*SOUNDBITE\*\*\***

**Dr. Greg Ward**

**OSF HealthCare general surgeon**

**"The other veins that are healthy take over and get the blood back to the heart more effectively. Then the legs don't hurt." (:06)**

I'm Tim Ditman.

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ANCHOR TAG:

Risk factors for varicose veins include being overweight, sitting or standing for long periods, lifting heavy objects, being female, pregnancy and having a family history of vein issues.