



Enhance !

By B-je Tan

Spider Veins: Could Be Signs of Skin Damage

The capillaries are the smallest blood vessels you can find in your body which distribute oxygenated blood from the arteries out to the tissues of your body, and then move deoxygenated blood from the tissues back into the veins. When capillaries or veins become damaged, it leads to a condition of venous insufficiency, which can result in the appearance of enlarged small surface veins called spider veins. Typically, spider veins, also called telangiectasia, appear to have a diameter of 1 millimeter or less, although their actual diameter may be up to 3 mm under the surface. Small spider veins are usually pinkish red, whereas larger vessels are blue or purple in color. Sometimes a cluster of spider veins may appear as a red or purple patch that are often mistaken for bruises. Unlike bruises, however, spider veins do not go away. You may observe some ladies (and men) who are constantly flushed. For me, a healthy blush is a good sight but redness that doesn't go away is alarming. Most spider veins are not symptomatic and are usually only considered a cosmetic problem. Some cases of spider veins are superficial and some are deeper which could come with a burning sensation or a dull, throbbing pain..

What Causes Spider Veins?

1. Genetics : Spider veins seem to be inherited from a mother or a female relative with this vein condition.
2. Pregnancy : Fluctuations in estrogen and progesterone during pregnancy, cause softening of the vein walls and valves. Increased pressure on the vein walls due to increased blood volume needed to provide circulation to the fetus may cause broken capillaries.
3. Injury : For facial spider veins, injuries can be caused by simply picking black/whiteheads (to your heart's content), rubbing the skin hard, over exfoliation, and real injuries like bumping and accidents. Trauma, such as bruising, can also lead to spider veins. This is the reason why I discourage my clients from picking the face (out of boredom) and squeezing the bumps on the face.
4. Chronic sun exposure can also cause spider veins, as well as other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, freckles, moles, and skin cancer. Unfortunately, broken capillaries are sometimes connected to "aging".
5. In some people with chronic allergies and inherited predisposition to vein conditions, repetitive sneezing and coughing can lead to enlargement of veins around the nose and below the nostrils. Episodes of violent vomiting can also create enough pressure to cause spider veins to form in the cheeks.
6. Constant redness and capillary damage can be signs of circulatory problems. Some medications can cause this condition too.
7. Use of strong products especially over-the-counter abrasive scrubs can cause too much thinning of the skin and can make the capillaries in the skin so susceptible to trauma by the slightest pinch..

I have seen ladies and men with facial spider veins. For some, prominent facial veins are caused by rosacea. This condition is marked by numerous red spider veins in the nose, cheeks, forehead, and chin, and is sometimes accompanied by acne breakouts. They are identified with the constant flushed appearance on the cheeks. Although the cause of rosacea is unknown, it seems that alcohol and spicy food consumption, as well as stress, may play a role.

Having "rosy" cheeks is not always a pleasant sight for me. "Rosiness" that is constant is something that worries me as an esthetician. It is a clear manifestation of a skin trauma which may be minimized and it is my job

to help and increase my clients' awareness of how it could be improved. Ironically, estheticians, themselves, who are not careful during extractions (removal) of blackheads can cause broken capillaries in your skin or aggravate the existing damaged capillaries. Skin with this condition especially acne & rosacea are treated with special care and are handled like expensive porcelains. Hot towels on your face, hot steaming and stimulating facial massage are best avoided. FYI, steaming is almost *not* a part of my facial protocol (unless demanded and not contra-indicated) because there are other ways to prepare the skin for better extractions. For me, steaming takes away valuable treatment time. I devote more time on important facial steps and allow the skin to get the most benefit out of the time allotted for the treatment.

Tone of the skin should be even. In my practice, redness signals red alert. It is imperative that I make the client realize that the use of aggressive products which forces desquamation (peeling) deeper than the epidermal layer of the skin backfires with hyperpigmentation or browning of the skin. This is especially true for Asian skin. Some ladies who are not properly advised about homecare after a whitening or chemical peel are suffering from erythema and "browning" of the whole face. My heart aches when I see extensive redness especially the "erythematic" appearance all over the face. Erythema is the shiny red skin appearance after a scab falls off from a wound. Can you imagine looking at a face that looks like a healing wound?

A client coming in for a treatment with constant redness from aggressive product- use realize that the Light Therapy helps heal, calm, soothe the skin and even out the skin tone. One of the **many benefits** of Light Therapy is the increase in vascularity. It helps improve the deteriorating ones and promotes building of new capillaries. This way, the skin condition is improved because more healthy capillaries are able to bring oxygen to the skin tissues and bring deoxygenated blood back to the veins.

With or without this condition, a person's best friend everyday of the year is a sunscreen. I use a dry sunscreen with SPF 18 that serves as my foundation, concealer, powder and sunscreen (4 in one) from the Jane Iredale Skincare Makeup and almost 95% of my clients coming in for a facial treatment gets a complimentary application of SPF 18 to protect their skin from the sun. Believe it or not, this is the only mineral makeup that touches my client's face right after a facial treatment.

Spider veins or superficial broken capillaries could be unsightly but they can be easily removed by a simple electro-coagulation procedure. Call me for more info. Happy Mother's Day!!

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