Treatment of Superficial Phlebitis

Superficial phlebitis affects veins on the skin surface. Phlebitis (fle-BYE-tis) means inflammation of a vein. Thrombophlebitis is the term used when a blood clot in the vein causes the inflammation. The condition is rarely serious and, with proper care, usually resolves rapidly. This type of inflammation is usually harmless and typically goes away in a few days.

Common Symptoms: redness in skin overlying a vein, vein warmth, tenderness

Occasional Symptoms: burning sensation, severe pain, heaviness when leg is down, leg cramps, pulling sensation

Treatment:

1. **Anti-inflammatory** agents are useful in reducing pain and limiting the contribution of local inflammation. You physician recommends that patients take:

   _____ Ibuprofen 400 mg – 600 mg every 4-6 hours daily until symptoms resolve

   OR

   _____ Aspirin once daily until symptoms resolve

2. **Compression stockings** provide a gradient of pressure that is highest at the ankle (at least 30-40 mmHg) and gradually decreases to the level of the thigh. The compression will reduce pain when standing and walking.

3. **Increased ambulation** is important to avoid venous stasis that contributes to the progression of superficial phlebitis. Try to walk at least several times a day.

4. **Warm Compress** or soaks for no longer than 20 minutes 3-4 times daily until tenderness resolves.

5. An **ultrasound** can be done to evaluate the deep vein system to rule out a clot, there is approximately a 10% incidence of this. Let the doctor know if your symptoms are not getting better, or getting worse

Call the office immediately if symptoms worsen or seem to be spreading upward in the leg.