

Garance Doré



When I was a little kid, going to the public swimming pool meant popsicles, underwater tea parties, and... ladies with varicose veins. They would create a twisted, bulging network of highways on their legs that I found to be grotesquely fascinating...

My mom had them, too, but to a lesser degree. And now, as fate would have it, I also have a fine web of spider veins that sprawl across my legs like those maps illustrating comprehensive cell phone coverage. I started noticing my spider veins — a clustered pattern of thin, visible veins different from varicose veins, which are larger, more prominent, more bulge-y, and a blue/purple color — when I was in high school and, since then, I've been fixated/self-conscious/obsessed with the way they I thought they ruined whatever my legs aesthetic potential.

In college, I envied those girls with perfectly tan, uniformly colored legs. I rarely wore shorts and when I did, I'd take a pen and draw an inky line over one particularly offensive blue squiggles that lives on the outer right corner of my left calf just south of my knee. When I hit my 30s, I found myself resigned to the fact that they were here to stay and have just sort of stopped looking at them. You know when you stop looking at your number of Instagram followers? Yeah, it was kind of like that. Freeing.

But still.

I've never been someone who has been drawn to the plastic surgery—if anything I've been a tad bit judgmental about it—but my dream of getting rid of them is still alive. The only problem is 1. My bank account, and 2. I hate doctors as much as Kanye hates Taylor Swift. So...a lot. That, plus I'm squeamish and don't deal well with pain.

But still.

So, I finally decided to get the 411 on the matter. I asked Cosmetic Dermatologist, [Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank](#), an expert on spider and varicose veins (amongst other things!), and these were the main take aways:

Turns out that spider veins are hereditary (thanks, mom) and an age related issue (sigh). Standing for long periods of time can aggravate them too, which makes sense since I waited tables for a zillion years. Based on what Dr. Frank told me, I'd likely be a candidate for V-Beam laser therapy (since I have such a vast network of veins). In this scenario the good doctor would move a laser across the targeted area—the laser's energy heats the red veins beneath the skin's surface, causing them to break into many tiny fragments and be absorbed by my the body. The result of the treatment can be seen immediately and no downtime is required afterwards. Done and done. Even better? When I asked him to rate the pain On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the most painful, he said 3—minimal discomfort and a small pinching sensation.

Have any of you ever considered out-patient plastic surgery like this? If so, what kind and how did it go?