For many people who work on their feet, tired, swollen legs may just seem like a fact of life. But it doesn’t have to be.

There are two powerful botanicals that have the ability to strengthen the veins of the legs and help stop the pain and swelling you’ve come to accept. They actually help improve the structure of leg veins, making this problem a thing of the past. Sound good? Well, keep reading, because this combination is the subject of this Terry Talks Nutrition®.

Red Vine Leaf Extract:
Red vine leaf may sound strange, but it is more familiar than you might think. If you’re already aware of the amazing effects of resveratrol from red wine, then consider red vine leaf its first cousin. The leaves from the red grape plant (Vitis vinifera) also contain some of the same powerful natural compounds that are one of the grapes’ great gifts. In fact, in addition to resveratrol, red vine leaf extract also provides anthocyanins and a range of other protective polyphenols. Best yet, it has been clinically proven to relieve the pain and swollen legs associated with varicose veins and chronic venous insufficiency (CVI).

Plus, red vine leaf extract is an excellent ingredient for overall circulatory system health, so while it’s helping strengthen the veins in your legs, it strengthens the vascular system throughout the body, too.

Clinical studies have definitely shown some real benefits for CVI. In one randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical study, individuals with CVI from a wide age range (25 to 75 years old) took either a lower (360 mg) or higher dose (720 mg) of red vine leaf extract, or a placebo. The patients involved in the study were not using any conventional treatments for CVI, including compression stockings that help “push” blood back up toward the heart (and are usually worn every day), or diuretics.

By the end of the 12-week study, reduced CVI symptoms, including lower leg volume and circumference (due to less swelling and better blood movement from the legs to the heart) were seen in both treatment groups, although those using the higher dosage saw more significant improvements. By contrast, those using the placebo saw no improvement in leg circumference: in fact, the mean measurement actually increased!

The authors of this study felt that for anyone with mild CVI, red leaf vine extract was an excellent intervention, and was at least as effective as compression stockings and other conventional methods of treatment.

In another study, individuals with CVI used the higher dosage of red vine leaf extract, (720 mg) for just six weeks. By the end of the study, all of the subjective symptoms, including tired, heavy legs, tingling sensations, tension, and pain were significantly improved. Even in a short time, red vine leaf extract can make a big difference.

And later, another 12-week study, also using 720 mg of red leaf vine extract, showed similar results, reducing leg volume and improving other “subjective” symptoms, as well.

Yet another study examined how well cutaneous microcirculation—the very small blood vessels under the skin—reacted to a 360 mg red vine leaf extract. Like the other research I’ve mentioned, this randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial included patients specifically with CVI. Aside from microvascular blood flow, the study looked at leg edema, and oxygen transport in the blood.

After just six weeks – even at what could be considered a lower dosage – blood flow improved, and leg circumference decreased, proving that red leaf vine extract is a very potent botanical.

To your good health,
Terry... Naturally

TERRY’S BOTTOM LINE:
If you have varicose veins or legs that are swollen, heavy, and tired, there are natural ingredients that can help.

Red Vine Leaf Extract and Butcher’s Broom are a powerful combination of two clinically-tested botanicals to:
- Repair blood vessels in legs
- Stop formation of varicose veins
- Help prevent chronic venous insufficiency
- Eliminate the heavy, painful feeling in your legs
- Strengthen blood vessels throughout the body

Here is the formula I suggest:

Proprietary Complex 1,000 mg
Containing Red Vine (Vitis vinifera L.) Leaf Extract triple standardized to contain >30% polyphenols, >0.3% anthocyanins, >5 mg/100 g trans-resveratrols, Butchers Broom (Ruscus aculeatus) Root Extract standardized to 10% ruscogenins

More...
Butcher’s Broom:
You’ve probably already heard of butcher’s broom (Ruscus aculeatus). It is extremely well known for treating varicose veins, other symptoms of CVI, and circulatory health in general.

Clinical research investigating butcher’s broom has found impressive results. One multi-center, double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled trial wanted to confirm how effective butcher’s broom extract truly was for chronic venous insufficiency. In fact, the researchers very deliberately wanted to use the same standards for butcher’s broom as were used in conventional drugs to treat the same condition.

The study focused on a few parameters, many of the same ones, in fact, as the red vine leaf extract: leg volume changes, circumference of the lower leg and ankle, and subjective symptoms including quality of life, overall effectiveness, and tolerability.

Compared to the placebo, the results were dramatic. Already at 8 weeks, a significant improvement was seen in leg volume (reduced by 16.5 ml) and ankle and leg circumferences. By 12 weeks, leg volume was reduced even further, (20.5 ml), and the heaviness and tension in the legs had noticeably improved for the study participants, too. Butcher’s broom extract was clearly helping the veins in the legs pump blood back up toward the heart, and because of this, the “subjective symptoms” – the feelings that make CVI so tough to live with – became better as well. Best of all, butcher’s broom was well-tolerated, too.

The authors of the study concluded that the botanical was a safe and effective treatment for people dealing with CVI. After all, the results speak for themselves!

The key to butcher’s brooms effectiveness appears to be the compound ruscogenin. In tests with butcher’s broom alone, or in combination with other ingredients, it helps repair the delicate circulatory machinery that helps our blood vessels work normally. Beyond its ability to fight varicose veins, edema, and thrombosis, it also has anti-inflammatory power.

In combination with other ingredients, butcher’s broom is a good team player. Time and again, clinical studies have shown that it reduces leg swelling and edema and increases “venous tone”, meaning it makes blood vessels and capillaries stronger and healthier.

Not surprisingly, butcher’s broom has been shown to improve other circulatory concerns, too. There is good reason to believe that butcher’s broom would be very useful for those suffering from chronic orthostatic hypotension, a condition of low blood pressure that makes people feel dizzy when standing. This unfortunate concern often affects people with diabetes, Parkinson’s and those with chronic fatigue syndrome.

In this case, blood pools in the limbs throughout the body and only improves when the individual is lying down. Researchers are looking at the potential of butcher’s broom to treat this condition due to its strong history of protecting capillaries and strengthening blood vessel structure. It will be fascinating to see how the uses of this well-respected botanical continue to expand in the years ahead.

Last but not least, improving the strength of blood vessel walls and promoting better circulatory return from the legs can greatly reduce the appearance of varicose veins.

Put Some Spring in Your Step
Aside from red vine leaf extract and butcher’s broom, there are some lifestyle tips I would recommend for anyone dealing with varicose veins or CVI.

First, if you need to be on your feet for work for long periods of time – stretch. Raise your legs occasionally, move them, even while you’re standing still, and flex your lower leg muscles to keep your blood moving.

Second, as tough as it may sound – especially when you’re on your feet all the time – avoid the temptation to sit down immediately after work. You’ll simply feel worse when you get up from the couch, and over the long term, it doesn’t do your blood vessels or overall health any good. Take a leg-stretching stroll around the block instead.

Third, get effective botanicals on your side. It’s important that you get the right, effective ingredients. That’s why the red vine leaf extract I recommend is triple standardized to take full advantage of the many powerful plant compounds, including polyphenols, anthocyanins, and resveratrol. The butcher’s broom extract is standardized for 10% ruscogenins – the herb’s key component.

I think that once you experience how good life can be without the heavy, tired feeling and swelling in your legs, you’ll be happy you tried my suggestions.

When in doubt, always consult your physician or health care practitioner. This column is to provide you with information to maintain your health.

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