

Epidemiology

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The adult prevalence of visible varicose veins is between 30% and 50%. Factors affecting prevalence include:

- Gender:** the vast majority of studies report a higher prevalence in women than in men, though community prevalence may differ.
- Age:** the prevalence of varicose veins increases with age. In the Edinburgh Vein Study, the prevalence of trunk varicosities in the age groups 18–24 years, 25–34 years, 35–44 years, 45–57 years and 55–64 years was 11.5%, 14.6%, 28.8%, 41.9% and 55.7%, respectively.
- Ethnicity:** does seem to influence the prevalence of varicose veins.
- Body mass and height:** increasing body mass index and height may be associated with a higher prevalence of varicose veins.
- Pregnancy:** increases the risk of varicose veins.
- Family history:** evidence supports familial susceptibility to varicose veins.
- Occupation and lifestyle factors:** there is inconclusive evidence regarding increased prevalence of varicose veins in smokers, in patients who suffer constipation and in those with occupations that involve prolonged standing.

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