



Quick Reference Guide:

Amendments to MBS varicose vein items

Date of change: 1 November 2022

Amended item: 32520 32522 32523 32526
32528 32529

Revised structure

- From 1 November 2022, six Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items for varicose veins (32520, 32522, 32523, 32526, 32528 and 32529) will be amended to remove co-claiming restrictions for abdominal and lower limb venography when clinically indicated.
- The amendments will ensure that these services can continue to be performed with selective venography when appropriate.
- This change is the result of further consultation with the Australian and New Zealand Society for Vascular Surgery. The final recommendation to support the amendment of these services by the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) occurred in January 2022 and was approved for funding on the MBS in the 2022-23 Budget. Further details about [MSAC applications](#) can be found under MSAC Applications on the [MSAC website](#).

Patient impacts

- The changes support high value care and ensure patient safety. These changes reflect modern clinical practice and will ensure patients receive a Medicare rebate for venography services during varicose vein interventions when clinically appropriate.

Restrictions or requirements

- Providers will need to familiarise themselves with the changes to the varicose vein MBS items and any associated rules and/or explanatory notes. Providers have a responsibility to ensure that any services they bill to Medicare fully meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the legislation.
- Providers will be required to include text with the claim that justifies the clinical need for venography when conducted during a varicose vein service.

- Claiming Same-Day Restriction:
 - “Not being a service associated with” refers to a restriction preventing the payment of a benefit when the service is performed in association (on the same occasion) with a specific MBS item or item range, another MBS item within the same group or subgroup or a similar type of service or procedure.
- Multiple Operation Rule (MOR) – applies if you bill 2 or more MBS items from Category 3, Group T8 for surgical services performed on a patient on one occasion:

The Total schedule for all surgical items is calculated by applying the MOR. That is:

- 100% of the fee for the item with the highest schedule fee;
- plus 50% of the fee for the item with the next highest schedule fee;
- plus 25% of the fee for any further surgical items.

Applying this rule results in one total schedule fee for all surgical items billed.

(see explanatory note [TN.8.2](#) at MBS Online for more information)

- Aftercare – post-operative care and treatment provided to patients after an operation:
 - Aftercare is the post-operative care and treatment provided to patients after a surgical operation or procedure. This includes all attendances until recovery and the final check or examination. Aftercare services can take place at a hospital, private rooms or a patient’s home. MBS fees for most surgical items in MBS Group T8 include an aftercare component.
 - Some MBS services don’t include aftercare, and this is noted in their description. Group T8 items that do not contain this note include aftercare. Schedule fees for most surgical items include normal post-operative care. This means attendance items for normal aftercare cannot be billed. However, if the MBS description of the surgical item performed excludes aftercare, or if it’s an unrelated condition or complications from the operation, an attendance item can be billed for providing aftercare.
-

Amended item 32520 – Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein using a laser probe

Overview: This item has been amended to remove the co-claiming restriction for abdominal and lower limb venography.

Service/Descriptor:

Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using a laser probe introduced by an endovenous catheter, if all of the following apply:

- (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great or small saphenous vein (whichever is to be treated) of the patient demonstrates reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer;
- (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux:
 - (i) ache;
 - (ii) pain;
 - (iii) tightness;
 - (iv) skin irritation;
 - (v) heaviness;
 - (vi) muscle cramps;
 - (vii) limb swelling;
 - (viii) discolouration;
 - (ix) discomfort;
 - (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction;
- (c) the service does not include radiofrequency diathermy, radiofrequency ablation or cyanoacrylate adhesive;
- (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:
 - (i) 32500 to 32507;
 - (ii) 35200;
 - (iii) 59970 to 60021;
 - (iv) 60036 to 60045;
 - (v) 60060 to 60078;
 - (vi) 60500 to 60509;
 - (vii) 61109

The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both)

(Anaes.)

MBS fee: \$564.15

Benefit: 75% = \$423.11 85% = \$479.53

Private Health Insurance Classifications:

Clinical Category: Heart and Vascular System

Procedure Type: Type C

Amended item 32522 – Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein using a laser probe

Overview: This item has been amended to remove the co-claiming restriction for abdominal and lower limb venography.

Service/Descriptor:

Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using a laser probe introduced by an endovenous catheter, if all of the following apply:

- (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great and small saphenous veins of the patient demonstrate reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer;
- (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux:
 - (i) ache;
 - (ii) pain;
 - (iii) tightness;
 - (iv) skin irritation;
 - (v) heaviness;
 - (vi) muscle cramps;
 - (vii) limb swelling;
 - (viii) discolouration;
 - (ix) discomfort;
 - (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction;
- (c) the service does not include radiofrequency diathermy, radiofrequency ablation or cyanoacrylate adhesive;
- (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:
 - (i) 32500 to 32507;
 - (ii) 35200;
 - (iii) 59970 to 60021;
 - (iv) 60036 to 60045;
 - (v) 60060 to 60078;
 - (vi) 60500 to 60509;
 - (vii) 61109

The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both)

(Anaes.)

MBS fee: \$838.65

Benefit: 75% = \$628.99 85% = \$712.85

Private Health Insurance Classifications:

Clinical Category: Heart and Vascular System

Procedure Type: Type C

Amended item 32523 – Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein using a radiofrequency catheter

Overview: This item has been amended to remove the co-claiming restriction for abdominal and lower limb venography.

Service/Descriptor:

Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using a radiofrequency catheter introduced by an endovenous catheter, if all of the following apply:

- (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great or small saphenous vein (whichever is to be treated) demonstrates reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer;
- (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux:
 - (i) ache;
 - (ii) pain;
 - (iii) tightness;
 - (iv) skin irritation;
 - (v) heaviness;
 - (vi) muscle cramps;
 - (vii) limb swelling;
 - (viii) discolouration;
 - (ix) discomfort;
 - (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction;
- (c) the service does not include endovenous laser therapy or cyanoacrylate adhesive;
- (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:
 - (i) 32500 to 32507;
 - (ii) 35200;

- (iii) 59970 to 60021;
- (iv) 60036 to 60045;
- (v) 60060 to 60078;
- (vi) 60500 to 60509;
- (vii) 61109

The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both)

(Anaes.)

MBS fee: \$564.15

Benefit: 75% = \$423.11 85% = \$479.53

Private Health Insurance Classifications:

Clinical Category: Heart and Vascular System

Procedure Type: Type C

Amended item 32526 – Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein using a radiofrequency catheter

Overview: This item has been amended to remove the co-claiming restriction for abdominal and lower limb venography.

Service/Descriptor:

Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using a radiofrequency catheter introduced by an endovenous catheter, if all of the following apply:

- (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great and small saphenous veins demonstrate reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer;
- (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux:
 - (i) ache;
 - (ii) pain;
 - (iii) tightness;
 - (iv) skin irritation;
 - (v) heaviness;
 - (vi) muscle cramps;
 - (vii) limb swelling;
 - (viii) discolouration;
 - (ix) discomfort;
 - (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction;

- (c) the service does not include endovenous laser therapy or cyanoacrylate adhesive;
- (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:
 - (i) 32500 to 32507;
 - (ii) 35200;
 - (iii) 59970 to 60021;
 - (iv) 60036 to 60045;
 - (v) 60060 to 60078;
 - (vi) 60500 to 60509;
 - (vii) 61109

The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both)

(Anaes.)

MBS fee: \$838.65

Benefit: 75% = \$628.99 85% = \$712.85

Private Health Insurance Classifications:

Clinical Category: Heart and Vascular System

Procedure Type: Type C

Amended item 32528 – Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein using cyanoacrylate adhesive

Overview: This item has been amended to remove the co-claiming restriction for abdominal and lower limb venography.

Service/Descriptor:

Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using cyanoacrylate adhesive, if all of the following apply:

- (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great or small saphenous vein (whichever is to be treated) demonstrates reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer;
- (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux:
 - (i) ache;
 - (ii) pain;
 - (iii) tightness;
 - (iv) skin irritation;
 - (v) heaviness;
 - (vi) muscle cramps;

- (vii) limb swelling;
 - (viii) discolouration;
 - (ix) discomfort;
 - (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction;
- (c) the service does not include radiofrequency diathermy, radiofrequency ablation or endovenous laser therapy;
- (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:
- (i) 32500 to 32507;
 - (ii) 35200;
 - (iii) 59970 to 60021;
 - (iv) 60036 to 60045;
 - (v) 60060 to 60078;
 - (vi) 60500 to 60509;
 - (vii) 61109

The service include all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both)

(Anaes.)

MBS fee: \$564.15

Benefit: 75% = \$423.11 85% = \$479.53

Private Health Insurance Classifications:

Clinical Category: Heart and Vascular System

Procedure Type: Type C

Amended item 32529 – Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein using cyanoacrylate adhesive

Overview: This item has been amended to remove the co-claiming restriction for abdominal and lower limb venography.

Service/Descriptor:

Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using cyanoacrylate adhesive, if all of the following apply:

- (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great and small saphenous veins demonstrate reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer;
- (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux:

- (i) ache;
 - (ii) pain;
 - (iii) tightness;
 - (iv) skin irritation;
 - (v) heaviness;
 - (vi) muscle cramps;
 - (vii) limb swelling;
 - (viii) discolouration;
 - (ix) discomfort;
 - (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction;
- (c) the service does not include radiofrequency diathermy, radiofrequency ablation or endovenous laser therapy;
- (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:
- (i) 32500 to 32507;
 - (ii) 35200;
 - (iii) 59970 to 60021;
 - (iv) 60036 to 60045;
 - (v) 60060 to 60078;
 - (vi) 60500 to 60509;
 - (vii) 61109

The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both)

(Anaes.)

MBS fee: \$838.65

Benefit: 75% = \$628.99 85% = \$712.85

Private Health Insurance Classifications:

Clinical Category: Heart and Vascular System

Procedure Type: Type C

To view previous item descriptors and deleted items, visit MBS Online at www.mbsonline.gov.au, navigate to 'Downloads' and then select the relevant time period at the bottom of the page. The old items can then be viewed by downloading the MBS files published in the month before implementation of the changes

Please note that the information provided is a general guide only. It is ultimately the responsibility of treating practitioners to use their professional judgment to determine the most clinically appropriate services to provide, and then to ensure that any services billed to Medicare fully meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the legislation.

This sheet is current as of the Last updated date shown above, and does not account for MBS changes since that date.

Amended item descriptors (to take effect 1 November 2022)

Item	Descriptor
32520	<p>Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using a laser probe introduced by an endovenous catheter, if all of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great or small saphenous vein (whichever is to be treated) of the patient demonstrates reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer; (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ache; (ii) pain; (iii) tightness; (iv) skin irritation; (v) heaviness; (vi) muscle cramps; (vii) limb swelling; (viii) discolouration; (ix) discomfort; (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction; (c) the service does not include radiofrequency diathermy, radiofrequency ablation or cyanoacrylate adhesive; (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 32500 to 32507; (ii) 35200; (iii) 59970 to 60021;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iv) 60036 to 60045; (v) 60060 to 60078; (vi) 60500 to 60509; (vii) 61109 <p>The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both) (Anaes.)</p>
<p>32522</p>	<p>Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using a laser probe introduced by an endovenous catheter, if all of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great and small saphenous veins of the patient demonstrate reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer; (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ache; (ii) pain; (iii) tightness; (iv) skin irritation; (v) heaviness; (vi) muscle cramps; (vii) limb swelling; (viii) discolouration; (ix) discomfort; (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction; (c) the service does not include radiofrequency diathermy, radiofrequency ablation or cyanoacrylate adhesive; (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 32500 to 32507; (ii) 35200; (iii) 59970 to 60021; (iv) 60036 to 60045; (v) 60060 to 60078; (vi) 60500 to 60509; (vii) 61109 <p>The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both) (Anaes.)</p>
<p>32523</p>	<p>Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one</p>

leg of a patient, using a radiofrequency catheter introduced by an endovenous catheter, if all of the following apply:

- (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great or small saphenous vein (whichever is to be treated) demonstrates reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer;
- (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux:
 - (i) ache;
 - (ii) pain;
 - (iii) tightness;
 - (iv) skin irritation;
 - (v) heaviness;
 - (vi) muscle cramps;
 - (vii) limb swelling;
 - (viii) discolouration;
 - (ix) discomfort;
 - (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction;
- (c) the service does not include endovenous laser therapy or cyanoacrylate adhesive;
- (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:
 - (i) 32500 to 32507;
 - (ii) 35200;
 - (iii) 59970 to 60021;
 - (iv) 60036 to 60045;
 - (v) 60060 to 60078;
 - (vi) 60500 to 60509;
 - (vii) 61109

The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both)
(Anaes.)

32526

Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using a radiofrequency catheter introduced by an endovenous catheter, if all of the following apply:

- (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great and small saphenous veins demonstrate reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer;
- (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux:
 - (i) ache;
 - (ii) pain;
 - (iii) tightness;
 - (iv) skin irritation;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (v) heaviness; (vi) muscle cramps; (vii) limb swelling; (viii) discolouration; (ix) discomfort; (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction; <p>(c) the service does not include endovenous laser therapy or cyanoacrylate adhesive;</p> <p>(d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 32500 to 32507; (ii) 35200; (iii) 59970 to 60021; (iv) 60036 to 60045; (v) 60060 to 60078; (vi) 60500 to 60509; (vii) 61109 <p>The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both) (Anaes.)</p>
32528	<p>Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great or small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using cyanoacrylate adhesive, if all of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great or small saphenous vein (whichever is to be treated) demonstrates reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer; (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ache; (ii) pain; (iii) tightness; (iv) skin irritation; (v) heaviness; (vi) muscle cramps; (vii) limb swelling; (viii) discolouration; (ix) discomfort; (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction; (c) the service does not include radiofrequency diathermy, radiofrequency ablation or endovenous laser therapy; (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 32500 to 32507; (ii) 35200; (iii) 59970 to 60021; (iv) 60036 to 60045; (v) 60060 to 60078; (vi) 60500 to 60509; (vii) 61109 <p>The service include all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both) (Anaes.)</p>
32529	<p>Varicose veins, abolition of venous reflux by occlusion of a primary or recurrent great and small saphenous vein (and major tributaries of saphenous veins as necessary) in one leg of a patient, using cyanoacrylate adhesive, if all of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it is documented by duplex ultrasound that the great and small saphenous veins demonstrate reflux of 0.5 seconds or longer; (b) the patient has significant signs or symptoms (including one or more of the following signs or symptoms) attributable to venous reflux: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ache; (ii) pain; (iii) tightness; (iv) skin irritation; (v) heaviness; (vi) muscle cramps; (vii) limb swelling; (viii) discolouration; (ix) discomfort; (x) any other signs or symptoms attributable to venous dysfunction; (c) the service does not include radiofrequency diathermy, radiofrequency ablation or endovenous laser therapy; (d) the service is not associated with a service (on the same leg) to which any of the following items apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 32500 to 32507; (ii) 35200; (iii) 59970 to 60021; (iv) 60036 to 60045; (v) 60060 to 60078; (vi) 60500 to 60509; (vii) 61109 <p>The service includes all preparation and immediate clinical aftercare (including excision or injection of either tributaries or incompetent perforating veins, or both) (Anaes.)</p>

