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PELVIC VENOUS COMPRESSION

(May Turner syndrome)

Patient information sheet

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WHAT IS PVC?

It is one of the conditions that can cause chronic pelvic pain. It occurs when one of the veins in the pelvis (the common iliac vein) is compressed or squashed between the artery that supplies the right leg (common iliac artery) and the spine. It is usually the left vein that is affected although other veins nearby can also be affected. There is irritation of the vein by the artery and webs of scar tissue develop on the inside of the vein and can restrict the flow of blood from the legs toward the heart. It is a common condition and occurs in 20-25% of people and is more common in women. Not everyone has problems related to it and the percentage of people who have problems is not known. It is an anatomical variant and is not inherited or related to anything one has or has not done.

SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS

Symptoms can be very variable. Common ones include chronic swelling of the left leg; varicose veins (especially if they recur after adequate initial treatment); chronic venous insufficiency including pigmentation around the ankle, eczema, itching or ulcers. It can cause Pelvic Congestion Syndrome which includes heavy menstrual flow; heaviness or dragging in the pelvis; heavy feeling in the thighs or hips; back pain; pain on intercourse; pain or discomfort when passing urine.

ASSOCIATION WITH DEEP VENOUS THROMBOSIS

If the degree of narrowing of the vein is significant, there is an increased chance of developing a DVT. Where there are other risk factors, the risk is increased further.

MANAGEMENT

Conservative management is the usual course of action. If one has had an associated DVT, then the clot needs to be removed and the narrowing stented. Where the problem is PCS, then the vein can be opened with a metal stent placed through a puncture in the vein in the groin. This is usually done on the left side alone. Sometimes the right side is done as well. The procedure takes approximately 60 mins and is done as a day procedure under local anaesthetic.

