

# Varices

The term varices is usually used to describe the veins of the leg when they become **twisted** and **enlarged**. Varicose veins, as well as the milder so-called **spider veins**, are a cosmetic concern for some people. However, they may sometimes lead to more serious problems.

**V**arices may also appear in the anal area. They are known medically as haemorrhoids and colloquially as piles. Haemorrhoids are **cushions of blood vessels, connective tissue**, and muscle in the anal canal. When they function normally, they help **maintain** continence and **safeguard** against liquid escaping through the anal **sphincter**. It is when they become enlarged that they start causing problems. The main causes of enlarged haemorrhoids are: **straining**, or sitting too long on the toilet, chronic

diarrhoea and/or **constipation**, and pregnancy. Haemorrhoids are also affected by **obesity**, standing too long, or lifting too much.

**PTA: Guten Tag.**

Male customer: Do you speak English?

**Yes, a little. How may I help you?**

Well my problem is a little **embarrassing**. Is there anywhere more private?

**Yes, but we have to take a few precautions.** Good that you are wearing a mask. I'd be very grateful if you could disinfect your hands at the disinfection station near the entrance.

I have no problem with that.

**Thank you, a lot of our elderly customers are still a little bit lax when it comes to mask-wearing and hand-hygiene.**

It's good that this Perspex® is between us.

**I'm sorry, what is Perspex? Oh, you mean "Plexiglas"!**

I've heard it called that in English, too!

**Okay, so how may I help you?**

I have been having trouble going to the loo **recently**.

**The loo? Do you mean going to the toilet?**

Yes.

**May I ask what kind of problem? Haemorrhoids.**

**Oh, I see. What symptoms do you have?**

Well, it takes ages on the loo, and the last couple of days there was a little bit of blood.

**Was the blood bright red?**

Yes, why?

**If the blood was very dark, black even, it could indicate a more serious problem.**

That's good, isn't it?

**Yes, it is. Do you have problems with varicose veins in your legs?**

Yes, in fact I do.

**Could the varicose veins be caused by your job? That is, do you have to stand or sit for long periods, or do you do any heavy lifting?**

I'm a **long-haul trucker**. I used to do a lot of heavy lifting, but we have a mini-**forklift** attached to the truck nowadays. So, it's probably from the sitting, isn't it?

**It could be genetic, affected by heavy smoking, the constipation could come from not being able to use a toilet when you need to. Diet, especially not getting enough fibre, can also affect haemorrhoids.**

What do you recommend?

**This ointment which has an applicator, and camomile solution for a 15-minute, lukewarm sitz bath. Do you have any pain?**

I'm taking ibuprofen for that. How often can I apply the ointment?

**Up to four times a day. If the symptoms don't improve in a week, please go to a doctor.**

Thank you I will. Bye, bye.

**Good bye.**

*Catherine Croghan,  
Lecturer in English and  
native speaker*

## VOCABULARY

varices	Krampfadern, Varizen
twisted	verdreht
enlarged	vergrößert
spider veins	Besenreiser
cushions of blood vessels	hämorrhoidale Gefäßkörper
connective tissue	Bindegewebe
maintain	aufrechterhalten
safeguard	schützen (vor)
sphincter	Schließmuskel, Ringmuskel
straining	drücken (bei Stuhlentleerung)
constipation	Obstipation, Verstopfung
obesity	Adipositas, Fettleibigkeit
embarrassing	peinlich
precautions	Vorsichtsmaßnahmen
lax	lasch
recently	in letzter Zeit
bright red	hellrot
long-haul trucker	Fernfahrer/in, Fernfahrer
forklift	Gabelstapler
diet	Ernährung
fibre	Ballaststoff
camomile solution	Kamillenlösung
lukewarm	lauwarm