i. Varicose Veins

Causes

When you are pregnant, the walls of your blood vessels loosen because of the hormones and stretch in order to transport more blood. In addition, the uterus that is getting larger increases the pressure on the leg veins. Blood circulates more slowly and tends to accumulate in the veins. This may result in varicose veins.

Varicose veins are common during pregnancy.

If you have varicose veins, they will get worse during pregnancy. We often say that varicose veins run in the family. These veins are more frequent in overweight women, women carrying twins, or women who stand for long periods. Fatigue can also favour the development of varicose veins.

What can I do?

Here are few tips to help prevent varicose veins during pregnancy.

If you have varicose veins:

- **On the legs:** Wear support stockings. Put them on before getting up in the morning. If you get up before putting them on and your legs swell, lie back down for ten minutes with your legs elevated before putting your stockings on.

If nothing works?

- Discuss with your health care provider.
- Consult your health care provider before taking any medication.