

VEIN SPECIALIST

NEWSLETTER



MEMBERSHIP



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Promoting venous and lymphatic health

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Simultaneity: Einstein Decoded

When reading anything and you come across a word you have never heard of, you can either roll over the word, the sentence, or you can stop and dwell. Dwell on the meaning, dwell on the intent and dwell on the fact that you don't know something. I chose to dwell on the word "simultaneity." Never heard it spoken, never read it and never saw it employed in a sentence. Of course, I had some idea what it might mean, but the author clearly chose "simultaneity" and not "simultaneous" for a reason. I didn't know the word, let alone the reason of choice. But there was the word "simultaneity" on a Saturday night in the New York Times Magazine. The sentence: "The weirdest thing about the double-town-hall format was the simultaneity, which undermined the conceit that the unintended audience was undecided voters, looking to make an informed decision." What a thick sentence, I thought. Reading it was akin to walking through mud or trying to understand all of pelvic venous disease in five minutes. Slow progress. You can't roll over a sentence like this. I thought: What the hell does it mean? I kind of understood. But did I really understand?

We have Albert Einstein to thank for developing not only the Theory of Relativity but also the Relativity of Simultaneity. In his usual esoteric, convoluted, way above my head thinking, Einstein explains: "While the simultaneity of two events implies a coincidence of time, it really isn't." He continues, "Simultaneity is not an absolute relation between two events, each event has its own frame of reference which is not simultaneous to the



—Steve Elias, MD

other event." I guess two events can be occurring at the same time but there is no need for them to be simultaneous in a way that they are somehow related, they are not. The article was referring to town halls that were occurring in simultaneity – Biden and Trump but they were not related, not simultaneous. As Einstein had said many times, "It's all relative."

At the AVF, it is all relative as well. When you join a society, fellow members become your professional relatives. This issue is the "Membership Issue." Cassius Chaar, the chairman of the Membership Committee, has gathered members of his committee and members of the AVF to contribute

articles that give us a better idea about our professional relatives and what membership means. It starts with his letter as our Guest Editor. Read it – it is very personal and very good.

Groucho Marx would not be a member of the AVF. He wasn't a doctor. He wasn't a vein specialist. And if asked to be a member he would decline. As he had famously said, "I refuse to join any club that would have me as a member." Luckily, our members feel that being a part of the AVF is worthwhile. They are not Groucho Marx, although a few are sort of funny. We need members that don't just join, pay dues and renew dues. We need members who get involved, contribute and challenge leadership to listen and respond. So be the member that takes Groucho's other advice, "I have a mind to join a club and beat you over the head with it." Be part of the AVF club. Enjoy this issue.



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The American Venous Forum: Inspiration, Value, and Character

—Cassius Iyad Ochoa Chaar, MD, MS, FACS

As I reflect on my journey in academic vascular surgery at Yale over the past nine years, I realize how influential the AVF membership has been on my career. The AVF was the first professional society I joined as a vascular surgery fellow at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. I worked with Dr. Ellen Dillavou on a project studying the impact of size on the outcomes of laser ablation of saphenous veins and presented our work at the annual meeting in 2010. I remember that conference vividly: outstanding talks and excellent discussions in a very friendly environment. It sparked my interest in the field and developed a sense of belonging. The following year, I made sure to attend the venous fellow course organized by Dr. Steve Elias prior to graduation. Since, I have attended every AVF annual meeting and it has been an inspiring experience. Venous disease became a clinical interest and a research focus for me. My team was fortunate to have our research work presented at the AVF on numerous occasions and published in the *Journal of Vascular Surgery, Venous and Lymphatics*. I obtained a patent and a grant for the development of an endovascular device for retrieval of inferior vena cava filters. I edited a book on the “current management of venous diseases” that leaders and members of the AVF significantly contributed to. In retrospect, venous disease was not on my mind when I was a general surgery resident applying to vascular surgery. However, being part of the family of the AVF and interacting with the experts in the field like Drs. Peter Gloviczki, Seshadri Raju, and Rabiha Chaer, to name a few, were drivers of my motivation.

I had the honor to give back to the Forum by serving as co-chair of the membership committee with Dr. Nicos Labropoulos for the past two years. Our goals were to grow the membership and highlight its value. With the help of the board and all the leadership teams of



the AVF, we were able to create a list of potential new members and have successful recruitments. On the other hand, we worked with the outstanding Veritas team to ensure that our members remain engaged and committed. That strategy allowed us to increase our membership not only in numbers but also in quality. We focused particularly on three groups that were underrepresented at the AVF: trainees, Allied health practitioners, and international physicians. We have also invited students and residents to join the membership committee and help with those efforts. The AVF today is

more diverse in gender, race, training background (specialty), levels of training, and country of practice than ever before. The value of the membership is tremendous and goes beyond a direct monetary return on investment. The educational activities, professional development, and mentoring opportunities are outstanding. The willingness of experts and other AVF members to opine and share their experience in patient care is unparalleled. For our members who may still have skepticism regarding the cost of belonging to the AVF, I would like to provide you with one number. The subscription of the *Journal of Vascular Surgery, Venous and Lymphatics* is \$284 for US residents and \$331 for the international community. I hope that puts the value of the membership of the AVF in perspective as it provides complimentary access to the journal. We totally understand the cost burden of any expense, especially in the current dire economic conditions, and we appreciate your contribution. Please renew your dues to the AVF in a timely fashion. It is a lifeline to the organization.

The AVF is a professional society like no other. It has a character that distinguishes it from other societies. The interactions between experts from various specialties (vascular surgery, interventional radiology, cardiology,



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general surgery, hematology, vascular medicine, and others) coming from the four corners of the world is a unique feature of the AVF. It constitutes a fertile environment for cross-pollination of ideas to advance venous science and enhance patient care. This is highlighted during the annual meeting that is structured to merge education and innovation and promote social interactions. The camaraderie is genuine, and friendships are for a lifetime. Nothing could demonstrate this more than the forum finale 2020 Gala dinner that included an

entertaining show by leaders and members of the AVF. For two hours, the audience witnessed an explosion of talent manifested by drawings, comedy, magic, band playing and singing in a very special atmosphere. You probably think I am biased and that is ok. If you have been a member of the AVF for some time, you will understand what I am talking about. If you are a new member, join us at VENOUS2021 and you will experience it!



VENOUS2020: Dr Peter Gloviczki demonstrating in a Magic show how a rope tie disappears under the Jacket to Drs. Jens Jorgensen and Mark Iafrati.



VENOUS2020: Drs. William Marston and Robert McLafferty



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Earlier this year, we sent out two questionnaires, one concerning the Annual Meeting, and one concerning your membership in the AVF. I promised I would share those results with you, and the meeting survey results were shared earlier. As this is the "Membership Issue" of the Vein Specialist Newsletter, I thought we would present the results of the membership survey.

We had 97 responses (15% response rate). We are delighted to inform you that 80% were satisfied with their membership and would recommend the AVF to their colleagues. The most important benefits to our members were the access to the Journal of Vascular Surgery, Venous and Lymphatics and the Vein Specialist E-Newsletter, followed by the opportunities to earn CME and network at the Annual Meeting and other educational activities.

I would like to take this opportunity to address some of the open-ended questions, concerns, and suggestions brought by our membership through the survey. As a leadership team, we work tirelessly to improve the value of the AVF membership for every single member and value your input. Thus, one of the questions asked was "what would you like added or improved to your AVF membership?" Several members raised concerns about the costs of the meeting and the membership which is totally understandable especially in the current challenging economic times with an uncontrollable worldwide pandemic. I think if you compare the cost of attending the AVF meeting to other societies and venous educational courses, you will find the AVF cost is very competitive, and this also includes yearly dues. The AVF provides complimentary memberships to Senior Members and trainees, and International physician members pay a slightly reduced rate. In fact, the survey showed that 72% ascertained that the value of the AVF membership was equal or greater than the dues paid for the membership.



Harold J. Welch, MD

I would like to share some other comments, and my responses.

"Increase size", "recruit more members, especially young members from various disciplines." The Membership Committee has done outstanding work in recruiting lapsed and new members. Last year at this time we had 681 members, and as of now, we have 741 members. The online Venous Education Series, currently in progress, required trainees to become members in order to get free registration, and this has resulted in 31 new members who will be introduced to all that the AVF has to offer.

"Shared access to other online vascular related journals." We negotiated with SAGE, the publishers of Phlebology to give our members a discounted price for online access.

"More advertising opportunities if possible" and "more opportunities to share common concerns." Our website continues to undergo revisions. We have a Career Center, which we hope to expand on with your postings of job opportunities, and there is Find a Vein Specialist, which you have to sign up for and enables the public to find you. And of course, we have our very successful AVF Exchange, which is expressly for sharing common concerns, and interesting cases.

"Increased online access to learning materials," and "more online learning." One only has to click on Venous Online on the webpage to see all the talks from Venous2020, and of course the Venous2021 will also be available. The Venous Education Series (VES) is an outstanding program with excellent speakers covering the gamut of venous topics. We are also planning future webinars.

"Better collaboration with AVLS," "stronger voice in advocacy," and "a stronger link and collaboration with other major societies in the world, not the least



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EVF.” Firstly, there has been excellent respect and communication between the leadership of the AVF and AVLS. For over a year, the Health Policy Committees of the two organizations have had monthly calls to discuss appropriate issues where we can work together. Our Health Policy Committee Chair is also on the SVS Government Relations Committee and the SVS Coding Committee. We are working with other societies concerning guidelines. We have a formal agreement with the European Venous Forum (EVF) to exchange speakers and best papers, to have

their members eligible for the AVF Exchange, and to distribute the Vein Specialist Newsletter to their members. We are working on a formal agreement with the Society for Vascular Medicine as well.

While I couldn’t address all of the comments, I did want to hit the recurrent ones. At the top of our webpage, there is a link to “Ask the President”. I am happy to discuss any questions or concerns you might have. Thank you for being a valued member of the AVF.



AVF MEMBER SURVEY

80%

Members are **satisfied** with their AVF membership

71%

feel the **value** they receive is equal to or greater than their cost of membership

8.3



Average Rating

Likelihood to recommend that a colleague join or support the AVF

Member benefits scored highest for importance and satisfaction:

1

Print and digital subscription to the JVS-VL

2

Opportunities to earn CME

3

Online access to recorded sessions of the Annual Meeting

4

Our VEIN SPECIALIST Newsletter

5

The prestige of AVF membership

WHAT DO OUR MEMBERS LIKE MOST ABOUT AVF MEMBERSHIP?

- **Camaraderie** with fellow venous professionals
- The **Annual Meeting**
- The AVF’s **focus on quality** clinical information and evidence-based guidelines

What are we doing with this feedback?



A Strategic Alliance to Advance Our Field

– Hal Welch, MD and Dominik Heim, MD

It is our privilege to announce that the American Venous Forum (AVF) and the European Venous Forum (EVF) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that will guide our efforts to work collaboratively to advance the field of venous and lymphatic disease. By strengthening our bonds, we will strengthen our societies and the members we serve through this important international collaboration.

For many years, our societies have collaborated on largely a transactional basis that has included speaker exchanges for our respective annual meetings. These speakers have shared their research and personal experience and have made significant contributions to our respective meetings. This MOU goes much further and establishes a strategic alliance between our societies. Initially, this enhanced collaboration will include:

- **Leadership Engagement**

Regular communications and engagement of each other's senior leadership will enable the identification of areas of mutual interest.

- **Speaker Exchange**

The traditional speaker exchange program will continue and will be enhanced as leaders from both society's will travel to each other's meetings, as appropriate, to share knowledge, strengthen our relationship, and explore new opportunities to collaborate.

- **Annual Meeting Registration Discounts**

Members from both societies will receive a 20% discount for Annual Meeting registration at each other's meeting.

- **Membership Communications**

EVF members will receive the AVF newsletter, VEIN SPECIALIST and will have access to the AVF's exclusive clinical communication platform, AVF EXCHANGE.

- **Promotion of Key Educational Programming**

The AVF and EVF will promote each society's educational programming across various communications channels including websites, social media, emails, and newsletters.

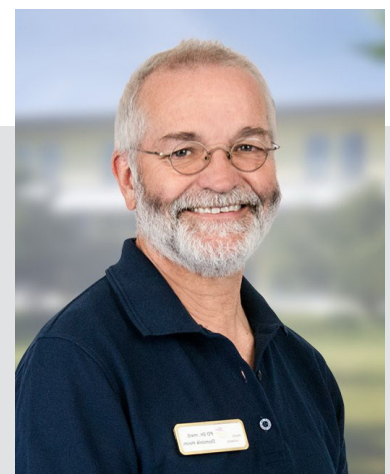
We both are thrilled by the prospect of this extended collaboration, that crosses the Atlantic ocean, that lies between us. And we are convinced, that this alliance is also of great importance to our patients who are suffering from the same disease on both continents. As our relationship evolves, we will be adding other initiatives that will enhance our efforts to advance the field and strengthen our respective organizations. We look forward to this journey together and to supporting the leaders who follow us and the members of our respective organizations.



– Hal Welch, MD



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– Dominik Heim, MD



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What is AVF EXCHANGE?

– Anil Hingorani, MD

The AVF Exchange is the only communication platform dedicated solely to making it easier and more efficient to consult with your peers around venous and lymphatic disease. The AVF Exchange allows AVF members to collaborate on individual cases, build consensus, advance medical skills, educate colleagues, and discover and critically evaluate medical data, knowledge, and technologies related to venous and lymphatic health and disease. Better yet, there is a support team whose only mandate is to work with you to ensure you are able to overcome any hurdles (technology, time, etc.) that may get in the way of connecting with your AVF colleagues.

Since its inception, over 60 engaging, up-to-date, and lively discussion threads have been started by AVF members, ranging from challenging case presentations, to new techniques, to compression therapy. The AVF Exchange is moderated, so if a post violates HIPAA or other laws, or is otherwise not in compliance with the AVF Exchange Code of Conduct, it is not published. The AVF Exchange is open to all AVF members with their paid membership. Members can communicate with all other AVF members at once, send direct individual messages, and AVF committees also have the opportunity to communicate and share documents through the AVF Exchange.

To start a discussion, sign onto the AVF Exchange and simply click on "Start discussion here." You will be on your way. It's that simple.



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AVF EXCHANGE



– Anil Hingorani

IN THE LAST 30 DAYS:

474 of 684

AVF EXCHANGE
MEMBERS (71%) HAVE
**Engaged with
the Community**

**68 Discussion
Threads**

HAVE BEEN STARTED

472 Overall Posts
HAVE BEEN APPROVED

ON AVERAGE,
THERE ARE

**6 Contributors &
5 Responses per
Discussion**



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AVF Mentorship Program

– Maxim Shaydakov, MD & Cassius Ilyad Ochoa Chaar, MD, MS, FACS

Promoting high quality research in venous and lymphatic disease is at the core of the American Venous Forum (AVF) mission. Over the years, the AVF has become a platform where physicians and scientists from leading academic and private institutions interact, collaborate, and share their knowledge to advance the field. The AVF supports research among its membership by offering the annual AVF-Jobst Research grant which provides up to \$90,000 for innovative projects that can improve understanding and management of venous and lymphatic disease.

Promoting research demands inquisitive minds to suggest novel research ideas. It is a pleasure to see that several AVF activities such as resident and fellow courses and annual meetings increasingly attract young physician-scientists to the specialty. A successful research project is also not achievable without deep inspiration, broad experience, and appropriate guidance.

“If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants” – a well-known quote by Isaac Newton¹ that can’t better describe the importance of mentorship in science. Whether it is your chief, teacher, colleague, friend, or a family member – we are all influenced by talented people who lead us in the path of discovery.

The AVF has recently launched the AVF Mentorship program. A group of AVF members has kindly volunteered to mentor and develop relationships with students, residents, fellows, and young specialists interested in venous and lymphatic disease. One of the principal goals of the program is to connect junior AVF colleagues who are interested in research to mentors who share the same interests in research and are established in the field. This connection will provide opportunities to discuss new research ideas and develop research projects under



– Maxim Shaydakov, MD



– Cassius Ilyad Ochoa Chaar
MD, MS, FACS



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professional guidance of the well-recognized experts of the AVF. The Research Committee will be available to support any research ideas sparked by the program.

The goals of the AVF Mentorship program extend far beyond promoting innovative research. The program has promising benefits to the membership and will likely attract new specialists to the AVF family. It will promote networking and collaboration among all members across the continents. This new activity will enrich the annual meeting program when the awardees share and report their mentorship experience. As you may know, there is still a lack of structured, consistent, and validated formal postgraduate training in venous and lymphatic disease. The AVF Mentorship program is a unique opportunity to learn pearls of diagnostics

and treatment of venous and lymphatic diseases from highly experienced physicians. As you can imagine, the number of potential benefits of the program is no less than the number of AVF members. Please, don't hesitate to reach out if you have any further ideas or suggestions on this new endeavor.

Any AVF member can now register as a mentor, mentee, or both, through the following link: <https://www.veinforum.org/medical-allied-health-professionals/find-a-mentor-mentee/>

Information about the AVF Mentorship Program can be found at www.VeinForum.org under the Membership tab or by clicking here.

The AVF invites all members of all specialties to sign up as a mentor or mentee.

References

1. Newton, Isaac. "Letter from Sir Isaac Newton to Robert Hooke". Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Retrieved 7 June 2018.



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JVS-VL Excels as Top Venous and Lymphatic Journal

– Peter Lawrence, MD & Peter Gloviczki, MD

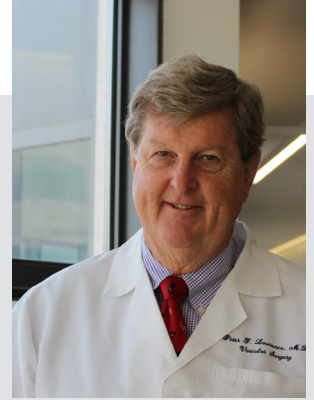
In 2020, the Journal of Vascular Surgery – Venous and Lymphatic Disorders (JVS-VL), the official publication of the American Venous Forum (AVF) and the Society for Vascular Surgery (SVS), remains the premier international journal in venous and lymphatic disease. Our Impact Factor increased from 2.696 to 3.137. We have over 2,600 print subscribers and over 8,700 online subscribers throughout the world. In 2020, the journal nearly doubled the number of articles from 145 to more than 250, and by the time the new year begins we expect to reach 450 submissions. Most of these, over 180, have come from the United States, followed by over 100 submissions from China, and also from other countries worldwide.

Social Media has been a source of great pride for our journal. We have 4,243 Facebook followers, 5,781 Twitter followers, and over 500 LinkedIn connections. In 2020 there will be an estimated 100,000 full-text downloads and 4,400 average monthly visits to our website, www.jvsvenous.org. An important development was the recording of podcasts by Audible Bleeding, reflecting the strong following of JVS-VL readers who use podcasts for their education.

In 2020, transformative changes were made in all JVS journals to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in our editorial and peer review system and JVS-VL was no exception. In an unprecedented move, we increased the number of women and underrepresented minorities on the JVS-VL Editorial Board and starting in 2021, they will represent 37% of our board membership and leadership (25/68).

The JVS-VL addressed the COVID-19 crisis by fast-tracking papers, and in the first nine months of 2020 published 45 articles, editorials, and letters on COVID-19 related clinical research, as well as novel systems that improved the care of patients with COVID-19 and venous disease. A seminal publication from the University of Michigan, summarized a broad institutional consensus, focusing on evaluation and recommended empirical therapy for COVID-19-positive patients and an international consensus document listed recommendations on the triage of patients with venous and lymphatic diseases during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many venous specialists have risked their own lives to provide expert venous care during the pandemic and we honor them for their dedication to the patients.

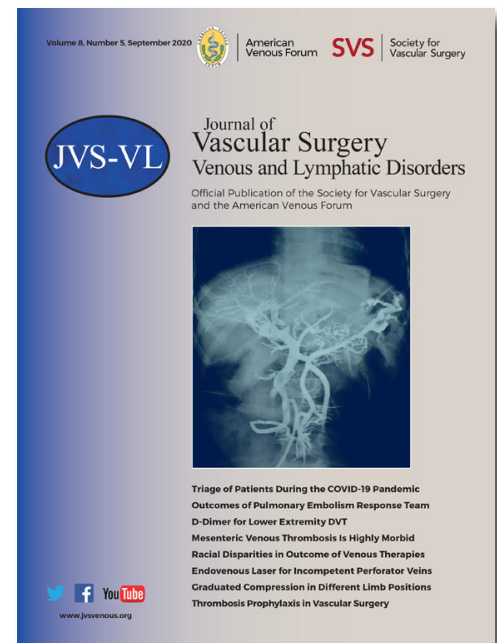
Two other important manuscripts deserve special recognition. The first is an International Consensus Document on the Update of the CEAP Classification of Chronic Venous Disease, authored by Fedor Lurie and colleagues, which provides uniform



– Peter Lawrence, MD



– Peter Gloviczki, MD



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reporting standards that are used around the world in clinical research and in practice guidelines. The other is "The 2020 appropriate use criteria for chronic lower extremity venous disease of the AVF, SVS, the American Vein and Lymphatic Society, and the Society of Interventional Radiology," authored by past AVF president Elna Masuda and her committee. This article provides guidance for venous specialists who want the best for their patients and only want to do procedures that have been judged to be appropriate by some of the best venous experts in the world.

The JVS-VL continues to evolve, transform, and excel. We are grateful to our reviewers, board members, staff, the two parent societies, the SVS and the AVF, for their continuous support and to the growing number of national and international authors who contribute to our journal.

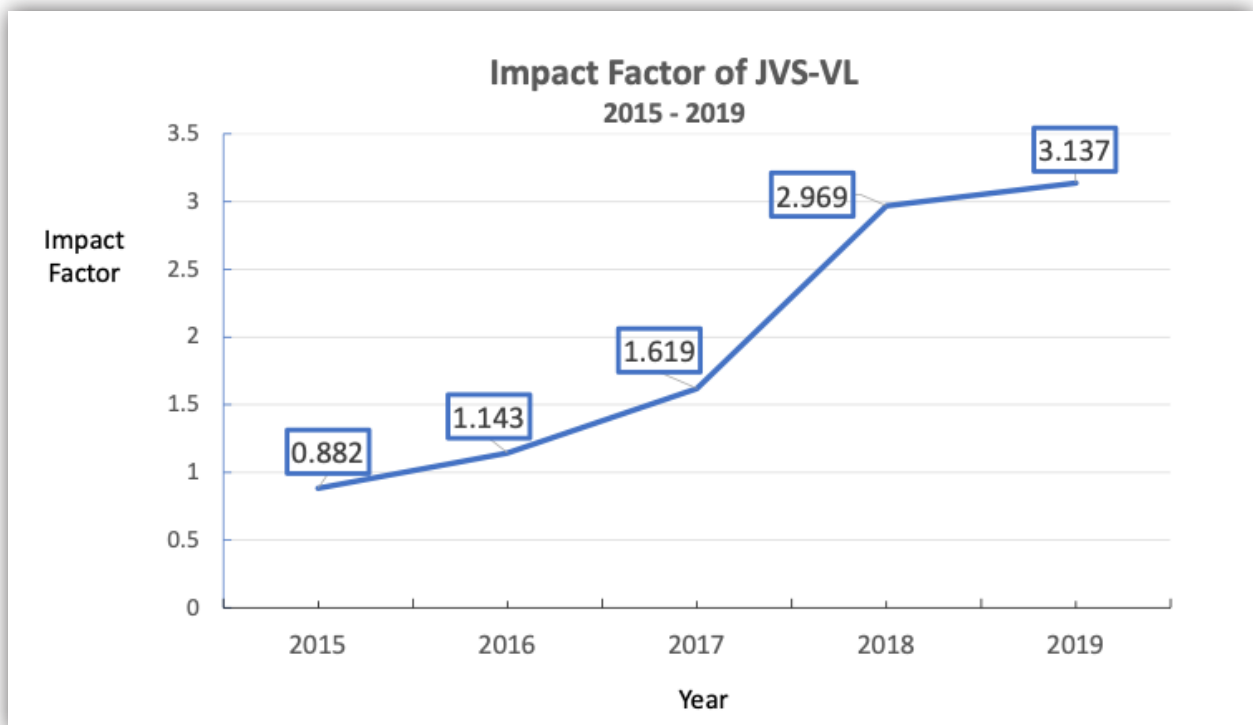


Fig. Impact factor of JVS-VL (2015-2019)



Publication Year	Title	Authors	Volume	Issue	Citations in 2019
2017	Venography versus intravascular ultrasound for diagnosing and treating iliofemoral vein obstruction	Gagne P.J., Tahara R.W., Fastabend C.P., Dzieciuchowicz L., Marston W., Vedantham S., Ting W., Iafrati M.D.	5	5	21
2017	VeClose trial 12-month outcomes of cyanoacrylate closure versus radiofrequency ablation for incompetent great saphenous veins	Morrison N., Gibson K., Vasquez M., Weiss R., Cher D., Madsen M., Jones A.	5	3	17
2017	Ablation of the great saphenous vein with nontumescent n-butyl cyanoacrylate versus endovenous laser therapy	Koramaz I., El Kilic H., Gokalp F., Bitargil M., Bektas N., Engin E., Egici M.T., Bozkurt A.K.	5	2	12
2017	Thirty-sixth-month follow-up of first-in-human use of cyanoacrylate adhesive for treatment of saphenous vein incompetence	Almeida J.I., Javier J.J., Mackay E.G., Bautista C., Cher D.J., Proebstle T.M.	5	5	12
2017	Deep venous thrombosis associated with caval extension of iliac stents	Murphy E.H., Johns B., Varney E., Buck W., Jayaraj A., Raju S.	5	1	12
2018	Analysis of threshold stenosis by multiplanar venogram and intravascular ultrasound examination for predicting clinical improvement after iliofemoral vein stenting in the VIDIO trial	Gagne P.J., Gasparis A., Black S., Thorpe P., Passman M., Vedantham S., Marston W., Iafrati M.	6	1	11
2018	Systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials evaluating long-term outcomes of endovenous management of lower extremity varicose veins	Kheirleiseid E.A.H., Crowe G., Sehgal R., Liakopoulos D., Bela H., Mulkern E., McDonnell C., O'Donohoe M.	6	2	10
2018	Randomized double-blinded study comparing medical treatment versus iliac vein stenting in chronic venous disease	Rossi F.H., Kambara A.M., Izukawa N.M., Rodrigues T.O., Rossi C.B., Sousa A.G., Metzger P.B., Thorpe P.E.	6	2	10
2017	New diagnostic modalities in the evaluation of lymphedema	O'Donnell T.F., Rasmussen J.C., Sevic-Muraca E.M.	5	2	10
2018	Twenty-four-month results from a randomized trial of cyanoacrylate closure versus radiofrequency ablation for the treatment of incompetent great saphenous veins	Gibson K., Morrison N., Kolluri R., Vasquez M., Weiss R., Cher D., Madsen M., Jones A.	6	5	9
2017	A systematic review and meta-analysis of two novel techniques of nonthermal endovenous ablation of the great saphenous vein	Vos C.G., Unlu C., Bosma J., van Vlijmen C.J., de Nie A.J., Schreve M.A.	5	6	9
2017	Endovascular management of chronic total occlusions of the inferior vena cava and iliac veins	Murphy E.H., Johns B., Varney E., Raju S.	5	1	9

Table 1. The top 10 papers published in the JVS-VL in 2017 and 2018 and most cited during 2019



Benefits to AVF Membership – Why you should belong

There are a multitude of benefits that are unique to membership in the American Venous Forum (AVF). Founded in 1987, the AVF is dedicated to improving care for patients with venous and lymphatic disease. It is a leading society with respect to research and clinical aspects of venous and lymphatic disease. One of the benefits of the society is its diversity of membership, which includes multiple membership options and spans across numerous specialties.



Sherry Scovell, MD

Education is one of the primary missions of the AVF with the goal of providing the highest quality, evidence-based knowledge and improving treatment options and care for patients. The AVF strives to raise awareness of the importance of these disorders and to prepare the next generation of venous health care providers. The Annual Meeting of the AVF plays a significant role in achieving these goals. This year as always, the 33rd Annual Meeting of the AVF, VENOUS 2021, is committed to providing a truly innovative and comprehensive experience with

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world-class
content,
including
the Day of

Science, the Strandness Keynote Lecture, as well as the International Session, Scientific Sessions, Late Breaking Research and Clinical Trials, and more. There will be a dedicated session on COVID-19 as it relates to the care of patients with venous and lymphatic disorders. Discounted registration fees are available for members of the society and CME credits for attendees. To support resident and medical student members of the AVF, registration is free. Submitted research that is accepted for presentation will be considered for publication in the Journal of Vascular Surgery: Venous and Lymphatic Disorders.

The Vein Specialist is a dynamic digital monthly newsletter, which includes brief articles on topics of interest to our subscribers.

Venous Online is an additional resource available for those who wish to review presentations from the Annual Meeting their convenience. Members will also receive full-print (in the US only) and digital access to the Journal of Vascular Surgery: Venous and Lymphatic Disorders.

Leadership and professional development is another important mission at the AVF. Through committee involvements as well as writing groups, our members serve as leaders in the field. There are a number of opportunities to volunteer as a committee member in an area of interest to you.

There are multiple practice resources which allow for continuing education, which include COVID-19 resources, and pre-printed standard informed consent for venous procedures. There is a listing of AVF annual meeting papers and their references, which have been published in the Journal of Vascular Surgery: Venous and Lymphatic Disorders. One extremely helpful resource is the listing of articles of excellence in venous and lymphatic disease. There are links to all of the clinical practice guidelines on the website as a quick clinical reference. Additionally, AVF members are listed on the website under the Find A Vein Specialist tab, which allows patients, referring physicians, and other healthcare providers to easily identify as physicians who are dedicated to the care of patients in our field.

The AVF also offers a variety of up-to-date resources to help educate your patients and their families. In addition to an entire section of the website dedicated to patient information, the AVF features an on-line book, The Layman's Handbook of Venous Disorders.



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Research, quality, and clinical practice improvement is also a substantial benefit to membership in the AVF. Clinical practice guidelines are developed through the AVF to assure that there is standardization in the care of venous and lymphatic patients. The AVF Exchange is available to members for the exchange of ideas related to practice and clinical care of patients. The Vascular Quality Improvement Varicose Vein Registry (VQI VVR) was developed in a collaborative effort between the Society for Vascular Surgery Patient Safety Organization (SVS PSO) and the AVF. This registry provides quality improvement data via a national database to capture information on varicose vein procedures. There are numerous benefits to participation in the VQI VVR, including the ability to drive improvement in clinical outcomes, reduce the cost of care for venous procedures in hospitals, outpatient facilities, and clinics, compare the efficacy of venous therapies, develop and share best practices, and to leverage quality research.

There are research awards available for member applications, including the AVF-Jobst Research Award and the AVF-NIH/NHLBI Research Award. The AVF-Jobst Research Award is the largest vascular research grant that is available to young researchers. It provides a two-year grant to a research fellow who is chosen through a competitive peer-review selection process. The AVF-NIH/NHLBI Research Award is a unique collaboration available for early researchers.

With changing health care policy and associated reimbursement for services, advocacy is such a critical part of the AVF today. It is a goal to make sure that our collective voice is heard regarding the present and future of our profession. Members of our Committee on Health Policy have met with CMS and work closely with the Policy Committees of the AVLS and SVS in collaboration to advance our mission.



The AVF Foundation (AVFF) was originally founded to promote venous and lymphatic health by raising funds for the AVF. Our mission is to inspire Healthy Veins

for Healthy Life. It is a wonderful mechanism to support the advancement of the field through investing in research, education, and clinical practice. Members are encouraged to participate.

Finally, membership in the AVF is so important for networking and socialization with other like-minded physicians and healthcare professionals. As a member, you have access to the AVF online membership directory. The AVF Career Center is available for members for career advancement and to help identify or share open positions in the field.

The AVF encourages all physicians and healthcare professionals who specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of venous and lymphatic disorders to become involved in this society and help to shape the future of the specialty. We are here to make a difference, and we want you on our team.

JoinTheAVF.org



American Venous Forum
Promoting venous and lymphatic health

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

LEARN MORE



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Promoting venous and lymphatic health



AMERICAN VENOUS FORUM
FOUNDATION
Healthy Veins for Healthy Life

EDUCATION

Annual Meeting	Receive substantial registration discounts and CME credits
Journal of Vascular Surgery – Venous and Lymphatic Disorders	Receive the AVF journal in print (US only) and online
Fellows and Early Career Courses	Attend didactic and hands on workshops to improve knowledge and skills
Patient Education Materials	Provide up-to-date educational materials to patients and families
Annual Meeting Video Library	Access the latest content from world-renowned venous practitioners

LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Committees, Writing Groups and Editorial	Serve as leaders of the AVF and have a voice in the advancement of the profession
Career Center	Find practice opportunities and post job openings

RESEARCH, QUALITY AND CLINICAL PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT

Clinical Practice Guidelines	Help develop and access the latest guidelines
AVF EXCHANGE	Access an exclusive online community to exchange technical and clinical information to advance knowledge and practice
AVF-Jobst Research Award	Eligibility for the largest vascular research grant available to young researchers in the field
AVF-NIH/NHLBI Research Award	A unique research collaboration available to early researchers in venous and lymphatic disease
Vascular Quality Improvement (VQI)	Provide quality improvement data and access a national registry in venous stents, IVC filters and varicose veins
C-TRACT Trial	Participate as an investigator and enroll patients in a national clinical trial

PUBLICATIONS AND NEWS

VEIN SPECIALIST – the Monthly Electronic Newsletter of the AVF	Written by AVF members, receive timely and relevant news about the AVF
Website	Access information and resources to support your practice and patients

ADVOCACY

Inter-society Collaboration	Represent the AVF with organizations to help advance the brand and mission of the AVF
Find a Vein Specialist	Remain visible to patients, the public and health care practitioners in search of venous experts

NETWORKING AND SOCIALIZATION

Annual Meeting, Fellows Courses, Receptions	Network and establish lifelong friendships with your peers and leaders in the field
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AVF FOUNDATION

Investments in Research, Education, and Clinical Practice	Contribute your time and treasures to advance the field of venous and lymphatic disease
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BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

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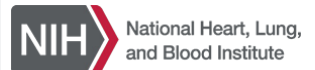
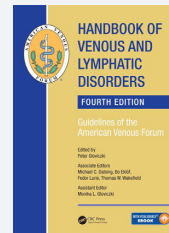
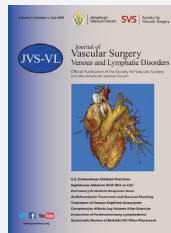
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HERE ARE SOME OF OUR EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCES:

VENOUS 2020
AMERICAN VENOUS FORUM

AVF EXCHANGE

VEIN SPECIALIST
NEWSLETTER



JOIN NOW



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Thanks to You, the AVF Foundation is Making a Difference

–Dr. Elna Masuda – President, AVF Foundation

The AVF Foundation is the philanthropic and fundraising arm of the American Venous Forum. Every year, the AVF Foundation solicits funds from individuals and venous companies to support key AVF strategic initiatives. Here are just a few of our 2020 accomplishments.

Clinical Practice Guidelines:

- The 2020 Update of the CEAP Classification System and Reporting Standards was published in the JVS-VL
- The 2020 Appropriate Use Criteria for Chronic Lower Extremity Venous Disease was published in the JVS-VL
- The Classification and Treatment of Endothermal Heat-Induced Thrombosis (EHIT) was completed, submitted and accepted for publication as a Visual Abstract and the Editors' Choice for the January 2021 issue of the JVS-VL
- Began work on a Lymphedema Delphi Project

AVF COVID-19 Resource Page

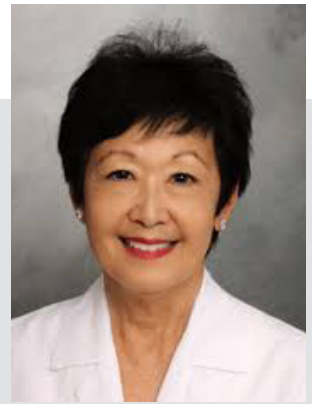
The American Venous Forum launched a web page of physician resources including an important AVF white paper, "Considerations in Prophylaxis and Treatment of VTE in COVID-19 Patients." This page also includes links to late-breaking COVID-19 research papers from around the world. We encourage you to access it at <https://www.veinforum.org/covid-19/>.

Venous Education Series

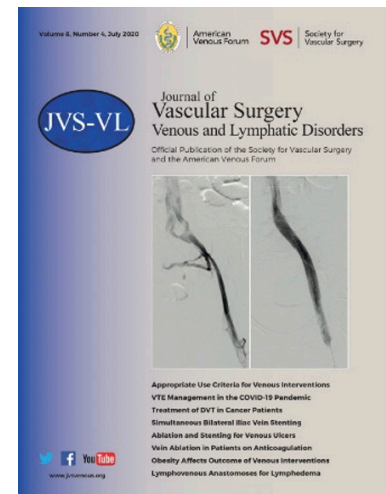
As COVID-19 eliminated the prospects for travel, our Fall 2020 Fellows Course was re-imagined as a new Venous Education Series for Residents, Fellows and Early Career Practitioners. Interest in this virtual 4-session offering exceeded our wildest expectations. While the in-person course usually attracts 30-40 attendees, more than 500 people from around the world registered for the VES and more than 200 of them from 20 US states and 33 countries attended the first live session.

Research and Leadership Development

The AVF Foundation continued to administer the AVF-JOBST Research Grant – the largest grant dedicated to venous research. The AVF Foundation also administers the new NIH-AVF Research grant and instituted the new AVF-Juzo Traveling Fellowship.



– Dr. Elna Masuda, President



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AVF Publications

The AVF Patient Education Committee has been hard at work developing 5 procedure-oriented patient brochures, 6 informed consent forms, and physician pocket guides for Compression, Appropriate Use Criteria (AUC), Revised CEAP and EHIT. Watch for their release over the next few months. The AVF is also working on a Healthy Veins book for patients which we hope to publish in 2021.

Venous Patient Outreach Survey

The AVF's Venous Patient Outreach Survey (vPOS) has been crafted and will be launched in January of 2021. This survey will assess what information venous patients are looking for, where they are looking for it and what factors contribute to, or deter them, from seeking venous care. The vPOS will maximize the effectiveness of future AVF patient information efforts and help more patients receive the venous care they need and deserve.

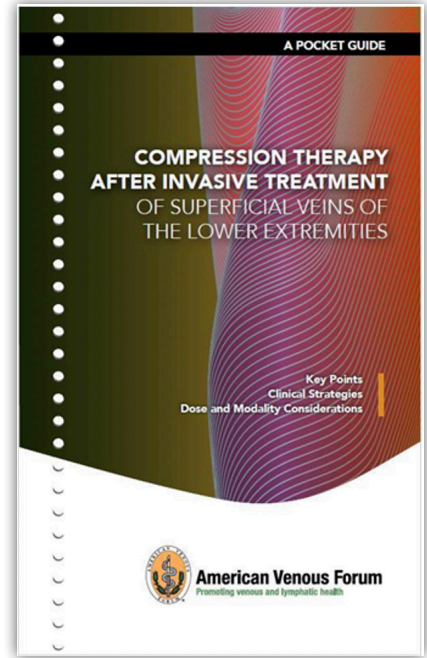
Despite the intense financial pressures of COVID-19, our industry partners have continued to fund our strategic initiatives.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT AS WELL!

Your donation to the AVF Foundation will further the AVF's vision to promote venous & lymphatic health by:

- ✓ Guiding the delivery of quality patient care
- ✓ Training the next generation of venous practitioners
- ✓ Supporting current practitioners with research and development opportunities
- ✓ Educating the public about venous & lymphatic disease and treatments

Please join us, GIVE NOW at www.AVFFoundation.org and together we can make a difference in the lives of venous and lymphatic patients!



AVF Member *Community*

Starting My AVF Journey Early

—Ahmad Alsheekh, MD

I am a medical student applying for integrated vascular surgery residency for this season. I had a passion for vascular surgery and venous disease and discovered the AVF to be the perfect place to improve this interest. Joining as a student member of the AVF was an important addition to my journey in pursuing vascular surgery training. From monthly newsletters to new guidelines and other activities, the AVF keeps me updated with current literature. The annual AVF meetings have a great importance by gaining the ability to share your work through poster sessions or oral presentations and by meeting with other experts from different levels. Expanding my social and professional network was something exciting to me, as I had the chance to meet with other peers and mentors who would answer questions regarding my career.

After I became a member, I had the opportunity to be part of the early career committee. This was a novel experience for me, which opened new doors and gave me the privilege to actively participate in the growth and advancement of the society. I encourage all medical students who share the interest in vascular surgery to be a member of AVF and enjoy the benefits of membership that would absolutely support them with building a career in vascular surgery.



— Ahmad Alsheekh, MD

Time to Renew



For most of you, this is the time of year we remind you to **renew your AVF membership for 2021.**

We hope this edition of Vein Specialist calls attention to our commitment to making the AVF your professional society home.



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AVF Member *Community*

New AVF Members - **Welcome to the Community!**

Christopher Paprzycki	Physician Membership - National, Ohio, , U.S.
Eduardo Silva	VES MIT - Portugal
Jithin Sebastian	VES MIT - India
Katherine Shreyder	VES MIT - Massachusetts, U.S.
Harold Waller	VES MIT - Massachusetts, U.S.
Lenka Bajuzikova	VES MIT - Mississippi
Jamil Muasher	Physician Membership - National, California, U.S.
Simon Fraser	VES MIT - Wisconsin, U.S.
Paul Hanna	VES MIT - New Jersey, U.S.
Narelle Magloire	VES MIT - Antigua and Barbuda
Jathin Rai	VES MIT - India
Sawan Sharma	VES MIT - India
Nestor Subong	VES MIT - Philippines
Antonio Duarte	VES MIT - Portugal
Ranjith A.	VES MIT - India
Harishankar Ramachandran Nair	VES MIT - India
Viswanath Atreyapurapu	VES MIT - India
Fayazuddin Md	VES MIT - India
Raghvendra Singh	VES MIT - India
Devendra Singh	VES MIT - India
Henrique Guedes da Rocha	VES MIT - Portugal
Karim Salem	Member-In-Training, Pennsylvania, U.S.
Nazish Sayed	Member-In-Training, California, U.S.
Sawan Sharma	VES MIT - India



AVF *Advocacy Corner*

Updated LCDs from First Coast and Novitas

– Harold J. Welch, MD – President, AVF

Mark D. Iafrati, MD – Chair, AVF Health Policy Committee

We are delighted to share with you updated LCDs for the Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) First Coast and Novitas. These LCDs which are scheduled to take effect on 12/27/20, are felt to be very reasonable and appropriate concerning the care of our patients with venous disease. Through the prolonged efforts of the AVF Health Policy Committee, in conjunction with the SVS and the AVLS Health Policy Committee, we have LCDs that finally are appropriate for patients, providers, and payers. In the future, hopefully these will either translate to a National Coverage Determination (NCD), or similar LCDs with the other MACs. Thanks to all the current and past members of the AVF HPC, and our friends at SVS and AVLS for this achievement.



– Harold J. Welch, MD



– Mark D. Iafrati, MD

First Coast Varicose Veins Future Effective policy: 12/27/20

First Coast Endovenous Stenting Future Effective Policy: 12/27/20

Novitas Solutions Varicose Veins Effective Policy: 12/27/20

Novitas Solutions Endovenous Stenting Future Effective Policy: 12/27/20



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VEIN SPECIALIST welcomes your thoughts and comments.

Please send all comments to info@avfmail.org



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**Disclaimer: The information featured in this newsletter selected by AVF, which offers educational materials, are not intended to be representative of patients with venous disease generally and should not be considered medical advice. Patients should consult their doctor to determine the best treatment decision for their individual disease.*

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