

Raymond Lydale Campbell served in the Army from 1968 to 1970. Instead of deployment to Vietnam, however, he was pegged for a special project.

"I was on order for Vietnam, but the general pulled me off for what he called a critical MOS (military occupation specialty), a crucial job assignment," elaborates Raymond, 73. "I was sent to a missile silo, where I worked on anti-ballistic missiles and similar projects. The work was very interesting. I got a chance to see many things."



After Raymond was discharged, he became an engineer with AT&T in Fort Myers. He retired in 2002 after 30 years of service, then spent 10 years with the Lee County School District as a teacher's assistant with exceptional student education. ESE programs provide services to children with special learning needs.

Asked which job he liked best, Raymond wavers.

"I liked working for the telephone company because nobody talked back to me or yelled at me," he reveals. "However, I also liked the school system and helping the kids when they had issues."

Raymond has been dealing with an issue of his own since 1996. That's when he was diagnosed with *lymphedema* in his legs.

Lymphedema is a chronic condition marked by swelling due to a buildup of fluid in the tissues. It is often associated with *venous insufficiency*, which occurs when leg veins are damaged and don't allow blood to flow back toward the heart. Ultimately, the affected veins leak and blood collects in the legs, causing swelling and discomfort. Non-healing *venous ulcers* are a complication of untreated venous insufficiency.

"I went to the VA complaining that my legs were achy and swollen and had painful sores on them that wouldn't heal," Raymond recalls. "They told me there was nothing they could do except wrap my legs because the sores were weeping. I had to change the dressings often or my pants leg would get soaked with the fluid draining from the sores. There was one really big sore that went all the way around my right leg.

"Over the years, I went to multiple doctors. I always asked why my legs wouldn't heal, and they said they didn't know. They told me to just wrap my legs and wear compression stockings. They all said there was nothing more that could be done. One doctor put a stent in my leg, and it still didn't heal."

Don't WEEP FOR ME

Laser techniques seal leaking leg veins and heal venous ulcers



The weeping ulcers on Raymond's right leg are now healed.

The ulcers on Raymond's legs caused intense pain that often kept him awake at night. After one such sleepless night last year, Raymond found Douglas H. Joyce, DO, a board-certified cardiovascular surgeon at Joyce Vein & Aesthetic Institute in Punta Gorda.

Dr. Joyce specializes in treating venous insufficiency with minimally invasive procedures. He treats all stages of venous disease from spider veins to venous ulcers.

"After I heard about Dr. Joyce, I called and made an appointment," Raymond remembers. "He told me what was wrong with my legs; it was leaking veins. He recommended laser surgery. He said it might take multiple procedures, but he could fix my legs, and I believed him."

Fixable Condition

"If I was grouping legs by the worst I ever saw, Mr. Campbell's right leg would be in that group," Dr. Joyce proclaims. "The skin on his leg was so thick it was like alligator skin, and he had large open wounds that were the size of my hand. There was an ulcer on the front, side and back of his ankle; it was one giant wound. One wound was infected and was draining. It smelled terrible. And the color of his legs was horrible.

"Mr. Campbell's condition had been ongoing for decades. He was treated with

the typical therapy: putting *zinc oxide* on the ulcers and wrapping the legs in compression dressings called *Unna boots*. He visited multiple wound care clinics, and pretty much everybody threw up their hands and said, *There's nothing we can do. It's not fixable.*"



Dr. Joyce was not deterred. He understands the root cause of venous insufficiency, leaking veins, is fixable. He was determined to help Raymond overcome his circumstances.

The cardiovascular surgeon began by ordering an ultrasound examination of Raymond's legs, which showed numerous veins weren't working properly.

Once the incompetent veins were identified, Dr. Joyce performed two minimally invasive procedures to close them: *standard laser ablation* and *single-needle laser ablation*, the latter a technique developed by Dr. Joyce.

"We used standard ablation on Raymond's long leg veins, the saphenous veins," Dr. Joyce details. "During this procedure, we slide a laser fiber along the length of the vein and use laser energy to seal the entire vein. Blood flow is then rerouted to other, healthy veins.

"During single-needle laser ablation, we take a specifically designed needle and, using ultrasound guidance, place it into the target vein. We apply anesthetic, then turn on the laser for 15 to 20 seconds, which spot-welds the area of vein being treated."

Dr. Joyce used single-needle laser ablation to treat the small, deep vein branches compromised in Raymond's right leg. Those veins are not treatable with any other method, the doctor contends.

"Using the single-needle technique, we closed all of Raymond's incompetent veins, and there were many," Dr. Joyce reports. "We closed every problem vein we saw until we got an ultrasound result that showed no more leaking veins."

"95 Percent Better"

The treatment results proved Raymond's faith in Dr. Joyce was not misplaced.

"The painful sores on my leg have healed," Raymond enthuses. "Dr. Joyce's laser procedures fixed my leg and improved my circulation."

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RAYMOND

Raymond's legs still swell due to the lymphedema, for which there is no cure. He manages the condition, though, with the help of a compression pump, which moves the excess fluid out of his legs and into his circulatory system to be eliminated.

"My doctor said I'll probably have swelling for the rest of my life because of the lymphedema," Raymond relates. "He recommended getting the pump and using it on my legs twice a day. It works fine. Unfortunately, my legs are swollen again the next day.

"I still have a few issues with my legs, but I'm 95 percent better. At least I don't have weeping sores anymore, and I don't have to buy all the gauze pads and elastic bandages I had to buy before to dress the wounds. I'm very happy about that."

Raymond is highly satisfied with the treatment he received at Joyce Vein & Aesthetic Institute. He's also impressed with the cardiovascular surgeon that performed the treatment.

"Dr. Joyce is fantastic. He's knowledgeable and clearly explained everything," Raymond raves. "He's the only doctor out of all the physicians I've been to that was able to help me. His staff is fantastic, too. They're kind and compassionate. I highly recommend them."

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Get Help From An Expert

To learn how Dr. Joyce can remove venous disease from your life, call or visit his office in Punta Gorda at:

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Douglas H. Joyce, DO, FACOS, FACPh, is board-certified in phlebology (venous disease), cardiothoracic and vascular surgery, and general surgery. After receiving his doctorate from the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine in East Lansing, Dr. Joyce completed his internship and surgical residency at Lansing General Hospital. He went on to receive several fellowships, including a surgical fellowship in cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, a special fellowship in cardiopulmonary perfusion from the Cleveland Clinic Foundation and a fellowship in congenital and adult cardiovascular-thoracic surgery from Deborah Heart and Lung Center in New Jersey. Dr. Joyce is a diplomate of the American College of Phlebology, American College of Osteopathic Surgeons and International College of Surgeons. He also is a former assistant clinical professor of surgery for Michigan State's Department of Osteopathic Medicine and the Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Jersey.