

Title: Peripheral Arterial Disease Diagnosis

Author: Marissa

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Abstract: Peripheral Arterial Disease is poor leg circulation. The patient can have discomfort or pain in their legs typically when walking or climbing stairs or skin changes. Without treatment, this can result in problems walking, loss of limbs such as toes, and in severe cases death. The pamphlet looks at how patients can tell if they are developing the disease.

This document was created by a medical student enrolled in the Primary Care Clerkship at the University of Minnesota Medical School as part of the course project. The aim of the project is to present information on a medical topic in the format of a patient education handout. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Minnesota Medical School physicians and faculty. These materials are provided for informational purposes only and are in no way intended to take the place of the advice and recommendations of your personal health care provider. The information provided may no longer be up to date since it has not been reviewed since the date of creation. The information provided should not be used to diagnose a health problem or disease, or as a means of determining treatment. In the event of a medical emergency, immediately contact a doctor or call 911.

Who is at risk?

- anyone over 70 years
- diabetics over age 50years
- diabetes for more than 10 yrs
- smokers over age 50 years
- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol

PAD, a common disease, affects 8-12 million Americans!

Anyone can get PAD, but Native Americans and African Americans can get it more.



For more information about PAD, see

American Diabetes Association

<http://www.diabetes.org/type-1-diabetes/well-being/peripheral-arterial-disease.jsp>

PAD Coalition

www.padcoalition.org/

Mayo Clinic

www.mayoclinic.com/health/peripheral-arterial-disease/DS00537

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www.inmysistersshoes.com
www.todaysseniorsnetwork.com

Developed by

**Marissa Lightbourne
MPH**

Peripheral Arterial Disease “How do I know I have it?”



**University of Minnesota
Primary Care Clerkship
Patient Education Tool**

What is PAD?

Peripheral arterial disease (PAD), or poor circulation in the legs, is the diagnosis for persons with a build-up of cholesterol in the arteries of the lower extremities.

Symptoms

People with PAD typically have leg pain. This pain most often happens when walking or climbing stairs and then goes away after a few minutes of rest.

The pain can be described as discomfort, cramping, fatigue, or numbness, tingling. Other problems a person may have are skin changes or hard to heal wounds or ulcers.

Symptoms are not enough to diagnosis PAD and anyone who has symptoms should tell their doctor.



Signs

The things the doctor looks for are loss of pulses in the lower legs. They also look for changes in color of the feet. There is redness when the legs hang down and paleness when the legs are raised up.

The skin can also appear dry and there may be a loss of hair.

Tests

The doctor can order a special test to see if you have PAD. This is the ankle brachial index (ABI), where a blood pressure is taken of your ankles and arms and compared to each other. Your ankle pressure should be higher than your arm due to things like gravity. Any number less than 0.9 means your arm is higher, and you have PAD.

