

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)

When there is insufficient blood flow to a limb of the body

What is it?

What is Peripheral Arterial Disease?

Peripheral arterial disease (PAD) occurs when there is **decreased** blood flow to your arms or legs due to **long-term fat build-up** in blood vessels. Decreased blood flow most commonly occurs in your **legs** during physical activity when blood vessels are not able to keep up with the demand of your legs.

What puts you at risk for PAD?

- High cholesterol
- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Lack of exercise
- Increasing age

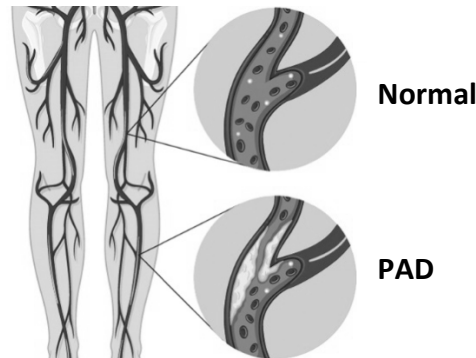
What are the signs & symptoms of PAD?

- 1) Pain into the calf or buttock with exertion. This pain usually improves with rest.
- 2) When there is little blood flow to the leg, severe symptoms can occur:
 - Severe pain not improved with rest
 - A pale or very cold limb
 - Loss of sensation into the limb

What will it do?

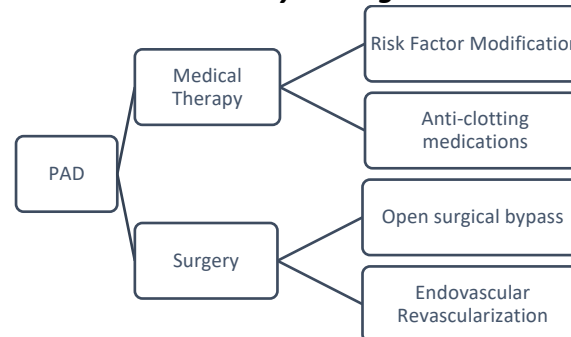
How does my doctor diagnose PAD?

If your doctor suspects you have PAD, they will use a test called an **Ankle-Brachial Index** to compare the blood pressure between your legs and arms. **Decreased pressure in your legs compared to your arms will confirm the diagnosis of PAD.**



Source: www.conehealth.com

How is PAD currently managed?



What can I do?

Risk Factor Modification:

- Quit smoking if you're a smoker
- Increasing exercise: Begin with walking and increase activity as tolerated (at least 30-45 minutes, 3 times/week, for 12 weeks)
- Treatment of high cholesterol with cholesterol medication

Anti-Clotting Medications (Aspirin)

- Recommended for all patients diagnosed with PAD to reduce risk of heart attack & stroke

Surgical Treatment:

1. Stents are used to open up blockages
2. A bypass uses a vein graft to go around the blockage and get blood to the limb

When to visit Emergency Department:

1. If you experience loss of movement or sensation in your leg, **AND**
2. If your leg becomes swollen, white, and tender or painful

Still have questions? Ask us @ teachandlearnfm.com

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Patient-doctor learning area: Use this area to write down questions for your doctor or use it as a space for your doctor to answer your questions.



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