



# Get a leg up on better health

Make sure Peripheral Arterial Disease doesn't stop you in your tracks

## Peripheral Arterial Disease (P.A.D.)

occurs when arteries in the legs become narrowed or clogged with plaque (cholesterol), reducing blood flow to the legs. P.A.D. can lead to leg pain when walking, disability, and even amputation. Blocked leg arteries can be a red flag that other arteries, including those in the heart and brain, may also be blocked – *increasing the risk of a heart attack or stroke.*

The **good news** is that P.A.D. can be treated by making lifestyle changes, taking medicines and, if needed, having special procedures. And, with an early diagnosis and proper treatment, you can live well with P.A.D.

## Who is At Risk of P.A.D.?

The chance of having P.A.D. increases as you get older. People over age 50 have a higher risk for P.A.D., but the risk is increased if you:

- Smoke, or used to smoke
- Have diabetes
- Have high blood pressure
- Have abnormal blood cholesterol levels
- Are of African American ethnicity
- Have had heart disease, a heart attack or a stroke

## What are the Signs and Symptoms of P.A.D.?

Many people with P.A.D. do not have obvious symptoms. But some people with the disease may have:

- Leg muscle pain that occurs with walking and goes away with rest. This symptom is called “claudication.”
- Foot or toe pain at rest that often disturbs sleep.
- Skin wounds or ulcers on the feet or toes that are slow to heal (non-healing for 8-12 weeks).

## Who Should be Tested for P.A.D.?

National medical guidelines recommend that certain individuals be tested for P.A.D. Review the following sentences and place a check in any box that applies to you.

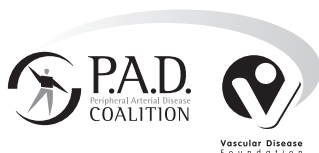
- I am under 50 years of age, have diabetes and at least one other risk factor:
  - History of smoking
  - Abnormal cholesterol
  - High blood pressure
- I am aged 50 years or older and have diabetes.
- I am aged 50 years or older and am a former or current smoker.
- I am aged 70 years or older.
- I have one or more symptoms of P.A.D.

If you checked one or more boxes, talk to your health care provider about being tested for P.A.D.

## Take Steps Now to Improve Your Vascular Health

Here's what you can do:

- Know your numbers. Ask your health care provider to check your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose. Work with your health care provider to improve any numbers that are not normal.
- Aim for a healthy lifestyle:
  - Get help to quit smoking.
  - Maintain a healthy weight (or lose weight if you are overweight).
  - Be active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.
  - Eat low-fat meals high in fruits, vegetables and whole grain foods.
- If you have diabetes, work closely with your health care team to develop a diabetes care plan that suits your lifestyle.
- Take medications as prescribed.



For more information, please visit [www.padcoalition.org](http://www.padcoalition.org) or call 1-866-PAD-INFO (1-866-723-4636)