What You Need to Know About Peripheral Artery Disease

A Close the Gap Informational Pamphlet

Close the Gap is a Boston Scientific health initiative aimed at achieving health equity in cardiovascular disease.

Peripheral Artery Disease occurs when a blocked blood vessel restricts the flow of blood to a part of the body.

Your body needs blood for healthy tissue and for healing.

A blockage in your leg can lead to the loss of your foot.

Blacks have the highest PAD rate in the US\textsuperscript{1}

Limb loss leads to life loss from more heart disease.

Diabetes affects 1 of 6

Blacks\textsuperscript{1}

Diabetics are 5-10X more likely to lose a foot than non-diabetics\textsuperscript{3}

Black men and women are 2X more likely to die from diabetes than Whites\textsuperscript{2}

Amputations

Diabetes causes PAD which can lead to amputation and early death.

Peripheral Artery Disease from Diabetes is the most common cause of amputation in the US\textsuperscript{5}

Blacks with PAD are 5X more likely to have an amputation than Whites\textsuperscript{6}

Causes of Amputation

- Cancer
- Vascular Disease (PAD & Diabetes)
- Trauma

How do you know if you have PAD (Symptoms)?\textsuperscript{7}

- Leg pain with walking
- Sores that won't heal
- Color change in your leg or foot
- Cold feet
- Thick, dark toenails
- Loss of hair on the legs and toes
PAD detected in the late stage often ends in amputation, early detection can prevent limb loss.  

PAD often has no symptoms early on, 3 of 4 people with PAD don't know they have it until tissue damage occurs.

Who Should Be Tested for PAD
- Leg pain with walking
- Non-healing sores
- Age over 65
- Everyone over 50 with diabetes, kidney problems or tobacco use

Guidelines state that patients who meet any one of these criteria should be screened for PAD.

What You Can Do To Prevent PAD

Tobacco
- DON'T SMOKE OR CHEW
- Quitting tobacco is the #1 way of preventing PAD
- Many treatments are available to quit tobacco
- Talk to your doctor about quitting

Diabetes
- Keep your blood sugar normal (100mg/dl)
- Keep your blood pressure normal (120/80)
- See a dietitian
- Protect your feet from harm - make regular podiatry appointments

Be Active
- Take simple steps to stay active
- Move/walk more
- Use the stairs
- Be more active when performing daily activities
- Maintain a healthy weight

Eat Healthy
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Eat more vegetables
- Eat lean protein: fish, eggs, white meat
- Avoid fried and processed foods
- Eat less salt
- Avoid sugar in foods and drinks

The flow of blood to the feet can be improved with medication and treatment.

References
1. American Heart Association. Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics - 2016 update
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health - Diabetes and African Americans
7. Mayo Clinic. Peripheral artery disease - Symptoms and Causes

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