If you think it's *JUST* leg pain... think again.

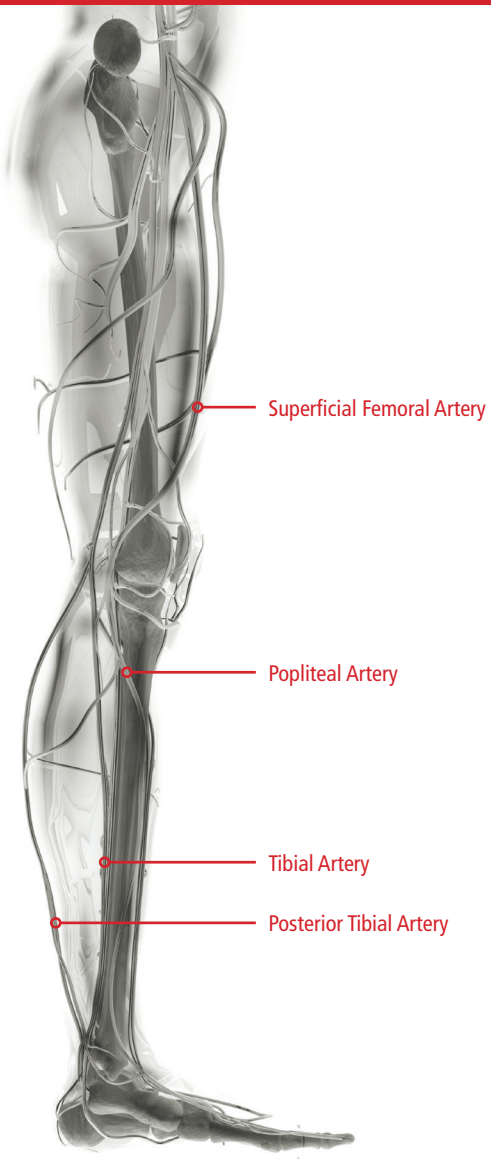
Get the facts on peripheral arterial disease (PAD).

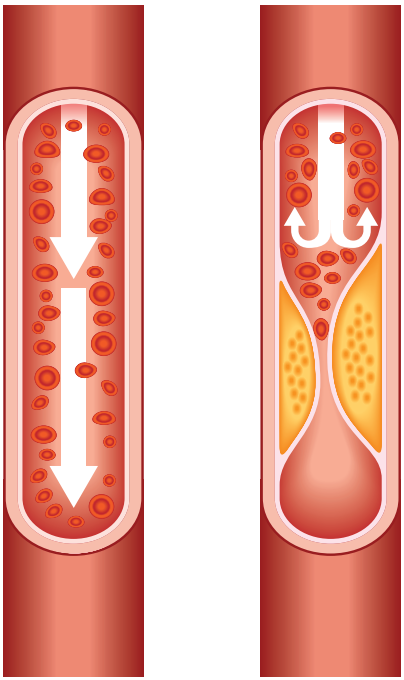
50% of people living with peripheral arterial disease do not show signs.[3,6]

Do you know what signs to look for?

What is Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)?

Peripheral arterial disease (PAD) is a term used to describe diseased blood vessels that are not related to your heart. It results from a buildup of plaque in the walls of blood vessels (arteries). This reduces or blocks the flow of blood to your legs and other organs. PAD is most commonly seen in the legs.





Clear artery

Artery blocked by plaque

People with diabetes are two to four times more likely to have PAD.[4]

Take Charge Of Your Health:

Know your risks and signs.

What puts me at risk?[1-5]

- ☑ Aging
- ☑ Smoking
- ☑ Diabetes
- ☑ High Cholesterol
- ☑ History of Vascular Disease, Heart Attack or Stroke
- ☑ High Blood Pressure
- ☑ African or Hispanic Descent

What are the signs?[1-5]

Cramps in the leg muscles (buttocks, thigh or calf) that occur during activities like walking or climbing stairs.

Pain in the legs and/or feet while at rest or that disturbs sleep.

Sores or Wounds on toes, feet or legs that heal slowly, poorly or not at all.

Colour Changes in the skin of the feet, including paleness or blueness.

Lower Temperature in one leg compared with the other leg.

Poor Nail Growth and poor hair growth on toes and legs.

How is PAD diagnosed?[1-5]

Your doctor or health care professional will review your medical and family history, perform a physical exam and order medical tests.

Physical Exam

During the physical exam, your health care provider may check:

- Pulse in your legs and feet to determine if there is enough blood flow
- Colour, temperature and appearance of your legs and feet
- Signs of poor wound healing on the legs and feet

Diagnostic Tests

Many people with PAD do not experience any signs.

They can only be diagnosed using specialized tests.

When checking for PAD, your health care provider may perform a series of simple tests:

Ankle brachial pressure index (ABPI): This test compares the blood pressure readings in your ankles and arms.

Doppler ultrasound test: This test uses sound waves to measure the flow in blood vessels in your arms and legs.

Transcutaneous oxygen measurement: This test measures oxygen level of tissue beneath the skin.

There are other tests and procedures that your doctor and health care professionals may order.

Your health care team will put together all of the pieces of information from your various tests to make a plan of care for you.

How is PAD treated?

There are three main approaches to treating PAD:

- Making lifestyle changes
- Taking medication
- In some cases, having an endovascular procedure or surgery

Treatment

Your health care professional will determine the best treatment option for you based on your symptoms and medical history. These may include:

Medical and lifestyle management

- Stop smoking
- Diabetes management
- Medical management
- Dietary changes
- Exercise programs

Minimally Invasive Treatment

- **Plaque excision** – removal of plaque
- **Angioplasty** – enlargement of a narrowed artery with a small balloon
- **Stent** – expansion of narrowed artery with a permanent metal tube

Surgery

- A surgical procedure to bypass the blocked artery

Ask to be tested if:

- **You are over 70**
- **You are over 50 and have other cardiovascular risk factors (high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol**
- **You are a smoker or a former smoker**

References

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4. Bell D. Peripheral arterial disease overview: Here are some guidelines for prevention
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   ACC/AHA Task Force on Practice Guidelines. *J Am Coll Cardiol.* 2006;47:e1-e192.

6. Gaps in Public Knowledge of Peripheral Arterial Disease - The First Canadian P.A.D. Public
   Awareness Survey. http://vasculardisease.org/files/pad-public-awareness-survey.pdf

Additional resources

Heart and Stroke Foundation
http://www.heartandstroke.com

Canadian Diabetes Association
http://guidelines.diabetes.ca

Wounds Canada
www.woundscanada.ca

Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario
(RNAO) http://rnao.ca/

Canadian Podiatric Medical Association (CPMA)
http://www.podiatrycanada.org/

CDN-V00065-E Rev. 2014/12

Canadian Diabetes Association
Diabetic Foot Canada
WoundsCANADA.ca
Ontario Podiatric Medical Association
In partnership with:
COVIDIEN
The Canadian Association for Enterostomal Therapy / Association Canadienne des Stomothérapeutes
RQSP
CPMA Canadian Podiatric Medical Association / L'association médicale podiatrique canadienne
RNAO