



Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) and Limb Loss

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Translated into plain language by Helen Osborne, 2006

Health Literacy Consulting, www.healthliteracy.com

Many people lose limbs (have amputations) because of peripheral arterial disease (PAD). This disease happens when fat builds up inside the arteries (blood vessels). Over time, this fat can block blood from flowing to the brain, arms, kidneys, or legs.

Here are some facts to know about PAD:

- People with diabetes are at high risk for PAD. They may get chronic foot ulcers which can lead to amputation of a foot or leg.
- Older adults (aged 65 and over) are at high risk of limb loss due to PAD.
- Men with PAD are more likely to have limb loss than women with the same disease.
- People in certain ethnic groups are at high risk for getting diabetes and PAD. This includes African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans

What you can do about PAD:

- If you smoke, stop.
- Be active each day. This can be walking, lifting weights, going to the gym, or being active in other ways.
- Eat a healthful diet. This includes plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Go to your doctor for regular check-ups. Your doctor will tell you how often you need appointments.
- Follow your doctor's directions. This includes taking medicine as ordered and going for all needed tests.
- Talk with your doctor, nurse, and other healthcare providers about other ways you can help manage PAD.

Ways to learn more about PAD:

- The American Heart Association website has a lot of information about heart disease as well as healthy lifestyle, smoking, weight management, and nutrition. Go to www.americanheart.org/
- The America Diabetes Association website has a lot of diabetes information including facts about nutrition, weight loss, and exercise. Go to www.diabetes.org

Translated from Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) and limb loss by NLLIC Staff
http://www.amputee-coalition.org/fact_sheets/dysvascular.html