

TODAY'S PODIATRIST TALKS ABOUT

# PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE

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## What is PAD?

PAD is short for Peripheral Arterial Disease. PAD is caused by blockage or narrowing of the arteries in the legs when fatty deposits called plaque build up. The buildup of plaque causes the arteries to harden and narrow, which is called atherosclerosis. This buildup results in a reduction of blood flow to the legs and feet. To the legs and feet, this is commonly referred to as poor circulation.

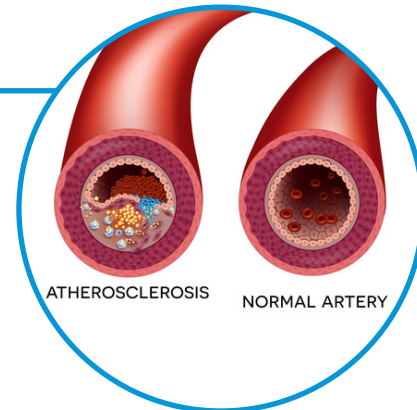
## Controlling Your Risk

PAD occurs most often in the arteries in the legs, but it can also affect other arteries that carry blood outside the heart. Arteries that go to the aorta, the brain, the arms, the kidneys, and the stomach can be affected. When arteries inside the heart are hardened or narrowed, it is called coronary artery disease or cardiovascular disease.

You can decrease the risk of developing PAD if you take steps to control the risk factors.

Risk factors and other conditions that may complicate PAD include:

- Smoking
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Physical inactivity
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- A family history of poor circulation



CONT. ON OTHER SIDE

# PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE

## Treatment Options & Common Signs

Medical treatment options for PAD include:

- Programs to stop smoking
- Blood pressure control
- Manage high blood sugar (diabetes)
- Medications to prevent clotting
- Healthy diet
- Exercise program

Many individuals with PAD do not experience typical leg symptoms such as cramping, pain, or fatigue known as claudication. The most common signs of PAD can include:

- Fatigue, tiredness, or pain in your legs, thighs, or buttocks that happens when you walk but goes away when you rest.
- Foot or toe pain at rest that often disturbs your sleep.
- Skin wounds or ulcers on your feet or toes that are slow to heal or do not heal for 8 to 12 weeks.

Remember, leg pain is not normal. It is important to discuss any leg or thigh pain that you are having with your podiatric physician, it could be a warning sign of PAD.



## Did You Know?

PAD and diabetes are the leading causes of foot or leg amputations in the United States.

People with PAD have a two-to-six times' greater chance of death from a heart attack or stroke.

The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) is the nation's leading professional organization for today's podiatrists. Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPMs) are qualified by their education, training, and experience to diagnose and treat conditions affecting the foot, ankle, and structures of the leg. APMA has 53 state component locations across the United States and its territories, with a membership of more than 12,000 podiatrists. All practicing APMA members are licensed by the state in which they practice podiatric medicine. **For more information, visit [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org).**