

Peripheral Arterial Disease Statistics

- Peripheral arterial disease (PAD) affects about 8 million Americans and is associated with significant morbidity and mortality.
- PAD affects 12-20% of Americans ages 65 and older.
- Despite its prevalence and cardiovascular risk implications, only 25% of PAD patients are undergoing treatment.
- In the general population, only about 10% of persons with PAD have the classic symptoms of intermittent claudication.
- About 40% percent of PAD patients do not complain of leg pain while the remaining 50% have a variety of leg symptoms different from classic claudication.
- In an older, disabled population of women, as many as two-thirds had no exertional leg symptoms.
- Intermittent claudication is present in less than 1% of individuals under age 50 and approximately 5% or more in those over age 80.
- The risk factors for PAD are similar to those for coronary heart disease, although diabetes and cigarette smoking are particularly strong risk factors for PAD.
- PAD is a marker for systemic atherosclerotic disease. Persons with PAD, compared to those without, have four to five times the risk of dying of a cardiovascular event, resulting in a two to three times higher total mortality risk.
- African-American ethnicity is a strong and independent risk factor for PAD. African-Americans have a higher PAD prevalence than non-Hispanic whites.
- Risk factors include smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and lack of physical activity.
- Complications include open sores that don't heal, as well as injury or infection of your feet and legs, especially if you also have diabetes.
- Critical limb ischemia (CLI) is the extreme of this condition and can cause tissue death (gangrene), sometimes requiring amputation of the affected limb.
- Stroke and heart attack are among the more serious and most common complications that accompany peripheral arterial disease. Atherosclerosis causing symptoms of peripheral arterial disease is not limited to your legs. Fat deposits also build up in arteries supplying your heart and brain. As a result, you have a greater risk of coronary artery disease and stroke.

References:

Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—2007 Update: A Report from the American Heart Association.

www.americanheart.org. Accessed online 4/24/07

National Stroke Association, www.stroke.org, Risk Reduction page. Accessed 4/26/07.

User friendly definition of atherosclerosis provided by: <http://health.allrefer.com/health/atherosclerosis-info.html>

Mayo Clinic – Peripheral Arterial Disease

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/peripheral-arterial-disease/DS00537/DSECTION=7> accessed 6/22/2007