

## What comes next? Managing PAD and other risks

If you've been told you have peripheral artery disease, or PAD, that means blood is not flowing properly in your legs or arms. It happens when fat and cholesterol (plaque) build up in the arteries of your limbs. It's also a red flag that you could have a heart attack, stroke or amputation in the future.

PAD is a serious condition. But taking action now can help you live longer and feel better. Remember, you are the most important member of your health care team. Your care team is here to support you!

**Use this resource to walk through your treatment options and speak up about what matters most to you.**

### PAD toolbox



Exercise



Quit Smoking



Healthy Eating



Emotional Health



Managing other  
conditions



Medications



Procedures

Your treatment plan will depend on:

- Your preferences and priorities
- PAD severity (how bad it is) and symptoms
- Other health conditions

Living with PAD may feel overwhelming at times, especially knowing that it can affect your heart health too. Let your care team know how you are managing, including your emotions, and ask about ways to lower stress and stay positive.

## ▶ My PAD treatment plan

Use this worksheet to check off recommended steps to manage PAD. Make note of any referrals or necessary follow-up where needed.



### Exercise

- Start a supervised exercise program. Studies show exercise can be as effective as medicines or surgeries for managing PAD and to prevent future heart disease. Exercise regularly to the point of mild to moderate discomfort (but not severe pain).
- Make walking or exercising part of your daily routine. Aim to be active for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes most days of the week.



Some activities that I enjoy and are good for me:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

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### Avoid smoking/tobacco use

- Talk with your care team for advice to quit smoking. Medications and quit-smoking programs can help. If you fail at first, keep trying until you succeed. Make a plan today, visit [Smokefree.gov](http://Smokefree.gov).
- Avoid secondhand smoke.

Notes:

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## Eat healthy

- Eat a healthy diet that includes whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Lower sodium (salt) – aim for no more than \_\_\_\_\_ mg a day by avoiding processed food, salty food, including many soups and sauces.
- Consider seeing a nutritionist or dietitian.

Notes:

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## Look after other health conditions

- Keep other medical issues under control.

	Yes/No or Not Applicable	Notes/tips
Is diabetes well-controlled?		
Is cholesterol at a healthy level?		
Is blood pressure at a healthy level?		
Other conditions to watch: * * *		



## Medications

Start recommended medications; people with PAD often take several. Medications can:

- Help reduce leg pain when walking or climbing stairs (cilostazol)
- Lower high blood pressure, cholesterol or treat diabetes
- Prevent blood clots from forming, which can break off and cause a heart attack or stroke
- Other recommended medicines \_\_\_\_\_

Use this chart to write down medications you might need.

Medication name	Dose	When and how to take it	Why I need this medicine/How it works	What to watch for
			<input type="checkbox"/> PAD <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiovascular benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Both	
			<input type="checkbox"/> PAD <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiovascular benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Both	
			<input type="checkbox"/> PAD <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiovascular benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Both	
			<input type="checkbox"/> PAD <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiovascular benefit <input type="checkbox"/> Both	



## Leg/foot care

- Examine your feet and legs for:
  - Sores or cuts that don't heal
  - Changes in skin color or temperature
  - Loss of hair or toenails
- Wear sensible shoes to avoid injury



## Procedures to open or bypass blocked arteries and restore blood flow

- Are not recommended at this time
- Should be considered soon
- Should be considered if no improvement before the next follow-up visit



## Minding your heart health and risk of stroke

- Follow good health habits outlined in this worksheet
- Make a plan for regular heart-health screenings. For example, make sure you are up-to-date with blood pressure and cholesterol checks or other tests your care team suggests.

## ▶ Follow-up and next steps

- Schedule your next follow-up appointment with our clinic.

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

In \_\_\_\_ months, come back to our office.

- See a vascular specialist: \_\_\_\_\_  
Use this space to write down the name and phone number.

- Other necessary appointments, imaging or blood tests
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## My goals and next steps

Write down the top 3 reasons you want to take better care of your PAD. (For example, be able to walk longer distances, keep up with grandkids, lower my chance of heart attack or stroke.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What can you start doing today that will help you feel empowered to manage PAD and lower your risk of heart disease or stroke? (For example, get cholesterol and blood pressure checked, ask for an ABI test or ankle-brachial index.)

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What factors do you expect will affect your ability to follow your treatment plan? (For example, concerns about medication side effects or costs, a place to exercise, quitting tobacco.)

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What will help	What might make it harder