



VascularWeb

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Patient Resources

What is Vascular Disease?

Most Americans are familiar with heart disease and with the consequences of blockages in the vessels that carry blood to and from the heart. But few people realize that blockages caused by a buildup of plaque and cholesterol affect more than coronary arteries. Arteries throughout the body carry oxygen-rich blood away from the heart, so blockages can occur in all arteries with serious effects.

Read more about Vascular Disease

What is a Vascular Surgeon?

Vascular surgeons are specialists who are highly trained to treat diseases of the vascular system. Your blood vessels --arteries carrying oxygen-rich blood and veins carrying blood back to the heart -- are the roadways of your circulatory system. Without smoothly flowing blood, your body cannot function. Conditions such as hardening of the arteries can create "traffic jams" in your circulatory system, obstructing the flow of blood to any part of the body.

Read more about vascular surgeons

Vascular Conditions

It is important to see a vascular surgeon, even when surgery is not needed. Vascular surgeons specialize in treatments of every kind of vascular problem except those of the heart (treated by cardiovascular surgeons) and the brain (treated by neurosurgeons). Three of the most recognized vascular diseases include Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm, Carotid

Artery Disease (Stroke) and Peripheral Arterial Disease.

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm

When the wall of a blood vessel weakens, a balloon-like dilation called an aneurysm sometimes develops. This happens most often in the abdominal aorta, an essential blood vessel that supplies blood to your legs.

Carotid Artery Disease

The carotid arteries are the main arteries in your neck that supply blood to your brain. A substance called plaque accumulates inside your arteries as you age. If too much plaque builds up in your carotid artery, it can cause the artery to narrow (carotid stenosis). Small clots can form, then break off and travel to the brain, causing a minor or major stroke.

Peripheral Arterial Disease

PAD is a chronic disease in which plaque builds up in the arteries to the legs. This buildup typically occurs gradually. If allowed to progress, blood flow in that artery can become limited or blocked all together.

[Read more about vascular conditions](#)

Vascular Treatments

Many vascular conditions are quite manageable, if you see a physician early. Vascular surgery and procedures are improving all the time, and sometimes no surgery is necessary.

[Find a vascular surgeon](#)