Considered one of the largest global health emergencies, diabetes is dangerous in large part because high blood sugar damages blood vessels. It also magnifies the effects of other health complications.

For Patients and Families - How Diabetes Affects Vascular Health

For more information, see:

- Type of Diabetes Suggests Different Treatment Algorithm for Chronic Limb-Threatening Ischemia
- Have Diabetes? A Few Simple Steps May Keep Your Feet Healthy
- African Americans, Diabetes and Amputation Trends. African Americans with diabetes face higher risk of preventable amputations.
- Six Diabetes-Related Vascular Complications. What impact does high blood sugar have on different parts of the body? [Infographic]
- Answers to Your FAQs About Diabetes and Leg Artery Disease. By SVS member Dr. George Andros
- Regular Walks Give Diabetics a Leg Up on Health
- Diabetic foot care. How to keep your feet healthy.
- Diabetic foot resources from the APMA (American Podiatric Medical Association)
- Peripheral arterial disease
- Peripheral neuropathy information from the APMA
- Kidney problems. Diabetes can impact the blood vessels that serve the kidneys. This can lead to kidney failure, dialysis and/or a kidney transplant
- Heart attack and stroke. Both can be caused by vascular damage, which is increased by diabetes. Learn more about how vascular disease can cause stroke.
Related illnesses of concern to patients with diabetes:

Arm Artery Disease

High Cholesterol

Peripheral Aneurysm

Renovascular Conditions

Downloadable brochures:

More info at Patient Resources
For physicians

Recent diabetes-related articles from the Journal for Vascular Surgery:


The association between diabetes and thoracic aortic aneurysms. Jul. 2018

Diabetes-Related Factors and Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Events: The Atherosclerotic Risk in Communities Study. Jul. 2018

Treatment outcomes in diabetic patients with chronic limb-threatening ischemia. Feb. 2018

Topical Oxygen Therapy Closes Chronic Diabetic Foot Ulcers. Sept. 2017

Location of Diabetic Foot Ulcer Affects Wound Outcomes. June 2017

Predictors of Unplanned 30-Day Readmission in Diabetic Foot Wounds. Mar. 2017

Other resources:

Rethinking Diabetes Oct. 25, 2018

The importance of exercise when you have diabetes Sept. 25, 2018

Interactive clinical practice guidelines app

Building effective partnerships between vascular surgeons and podiatrists.

American Podiatric Medical Association

Educational Slides for the The Management of Diabetic Foot: A Clinical Practice Guideline by the SVS in Collaboration with the APMA and SVM [PDF]

All SVS Clinical Practice Guidelines

Article Date: Wednesday, November 9, 2016
Article Type: Article