



Vascular Health Fliers

Vascular Health Fliers

Want to know more about vascular health?

Here you will find links to printable fliers on the most-requested vascular topics. Just download, print and share. The fliers are free as a public service from the Society for Vascular Surgery Foundation .



Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)

The abdominal aorta serves the entire lower half of the body. Nearly 200,000 people in the U.S. each year are diagnosed with an AAA, which can be deadly without treatment.

Aneurisma Aortico Abdominal (AAA)

CAROTID ARTERY DISEASE

YOUR VASCULAR HEALTH

What is CAROTID ARTERY DISEASE?

Your carotid arteries are two main arteries that carry blood from your heart, up through your neck, to your brain. Healthy carotid arteries are smooth and unobstructed, allowing blood to flow freely to the brain and provide oxygen, glucose and other nutrients that your brain cells need.

Typically with age, the carotid arteries build up plaque, made up mostly of fat and cholesterol. Plaque narrows the insides of the arteries and makes them stiff. This process is commonly referred to as "hardening of the arteries," or atherosclerosis.

Carotid artery disease results when the carotid arteries become narrow or obstructed and provide a risk of the plaque traveling to the brain and causing a stroke.



What is a STROKE?

Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of permanent disability in older adults. Approximately 25% of strokes occur when bits of carotid plaque or clot break off and flow to the brain.

If left untreated, carotid artery disease may lead to stroke, where lack of oxygen and other essential nutrients cause damage to the brain. Depending on its severity a stroke can be fatal.

Symptoms of CAROTID ARTERY DISEASE

- There may be no symptoms in the early stages of carotid artery disease, and stroke could be the first sign of the condition.
- Stroke, however, typically has warning signs, referred to as mini-strokes or transient ischemic attacks (TIAs).
- Mini-stroke symptoms are usually temporary, lasting a few minutes to a few hours, and should be treated as serious medical emergencies requiring immediate treatment because they are strong predictors of future stroke.
- Some symptoms of stroke or TIA may include:
 - Weakness, numbness, or tingling on one side of the body
 - Inability to control movement of a body part
 - Loss of vision or blurred vision in one or both eyes
 - Inability to speak clearly
 - Difficulty talking or comprehending what others are saying

Causes and risk factors of CAROTID DISEASE

- Age
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- High cholesterol
- Obesity
- Lack of exercise
- Family history of hardening of the arteries and/or stroke



Society for Vascular Surgery



Foundation

For more information visit [Vascular.org](https://vascular.org)

Copyright © 2016, Society for Vascular Surgery®. All rights reserved.

Carotid Artery Disease

The carotid arteries supply blood to your brain. Up to 3 percent of those older than 65 have carotid artery disease, which increases the risk of stroke.

Enfermedad de la Arteria Carotida

CHOLESTEROL AND VASCULAR HEALTH

YOUR VASCULAR HEALTH

How CHOLESTEROL affects your vascular health

When it comes to vascular disease, cholesterol is a common factor. It's a waxy, fatty substance found in the walls of human cells. The human body produces cholesterol but it also comes from foods that are high in animal fat such as eggs, cheese and meat.

But if cholesterol is not cleared equal it comes to artery clogged spots.

- Good cholesterol, or high-density lipoprotein (HDL), helps keep arteries from becoming blocked.
- Bad cholesterol, or low-density lipoprotein (LDL), can build up and cause blockages in the arteries.

Hyperlipidemia (hyperlipidemia) is the condition for the high cholesterol levels in the blood. The condition can lead to atherosclerosis, a disease that causes hardening of the arteries, also called atherosclerosis. This condition can lead to heart disease, stroke, heart attack, aneurysms and other threatening conditions.

When doctors tell you to "lower your cholesterol," one of those numbers is your cholesterol level. For good vascular health:

- Total cholesterol should be less than 200
- LDL cholesterol (bad) should be less than 100
- HDL cholesterol (good) should be less than 100



Why take statins for CHOLESTEROL control?

All types of atherosclerosis are caused when cholesterol builds up. Side effects are relatively rare, and if a patient does not tolerate one statin, there are many others on the market.

What are statins?

Statins are a type of medicine that is used to lower cholesterol. Specifically, statins lower LDL cholesterol. High LDL cholesterol is a risk factor for heart attack and stroke.

Can lifestyle changes impact CHOLESTEROL levels?

Yes. Your diet, lifestyle choices can impact cholesterol levels. For example, a 10 percent weight loss can result in a 10 percent reduction in LDL.

If lifestyle changes are not enough to bring your numbers to a healthy level, medication may help. Total cholesterol levels that are less than 100, less than 100 mg/dL or high LDL or high triglycerides may require treatment with a statin drug. Some conditions actually benefit from a statin even if your numbers are normal.



Society for Vascular Surgery



Foundation

For more information visit [Vascular.org](https://vascular.org)

Copyright © 2016, Society for Vascular Surgery®. All rights reserved.

Cholesterol and Vascular Health

When it comes to vascular disease, cholesterol is Enemy No. 1. Bad cholesterol narrows the insides of blood vessels, leading to vascular disease, strokes, heart attacks, aneurysms and other life-threatening problems.

Colesterol y Salud Vascular

DIABETES AND VASCULAR DISEASE

YOUR VASCULAR HEALTH

Diabetes affects the body's ability to absorb glucose, which is a form of sugar and a major source of energy. There are two types of diabetes: Type 1 (usually occurs in younger patients) and Type 2 (usually called adult onset diabetes).

Both cause high levels of glucose in the blood stream. High blood sugar causes many of the long-term effects of diabetes. Too much sugar in the blood damages the lining of the arteries of diabetes, and this can cause atherosclerosis, in which arteries are narrowed and/or clogged with plaque.

GLUCOSE IN THE BLOOD

HEALTHY BLOOD DIABETES

ATHEROSCLEROSIS

HEALTHY BLOOD DIABETES

ADVANCEMENTS IN DIABETIC PATIENTS can lead to:

- **Kidney damage:** Kidneys filter the blood, remove waste from the blood, but diabetes blocks their blood vessels. As the disease progresses, the kidneys lose function and eventually fail.
- **Neuropathy:** High blood sugar can cause the blood vessels in the eyes to become blocked. When you see things to give you blood vessels, they grow abnormally, eventually leading to blindness.
- **Peripheral artery disease:** Glucose damage to the arteries that lead sugar and nutrients to the legs and feet can lead to pain in the legs, foot sores that won't heal, ulcers, and even amputation and limb loss.
- **Blindness:** In this condition, the patient loses the ability to see. Decreased blood flow to the retina can damage the retina, leading to blindness.

If you or someone in your family has DIABETES, be aware that:

- Patients with diabetes are more likely to get vascular disease.
- Managing your blood glucose and cholesterol, maintaining healthy blood pressure and blood pressure control can help.

SVS | Society for Vascular Surgery | SVS | Foundation | For more information visit vascular.org

Diabetes

Too much blood sugar in the blood can cause atherosclerosis. Learn more about diabetes and your vascular health.

Diabetes y Enfermedad Vascular

PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE (PAD)

YOUR VASCULAR HEALTH

What is PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE?

You probably are familiar with the terms angina and heart attack, which are related to a blockage of blood flow to the heart. That same sort of blockage can occur elsewhere in the body, depriving the limbs (the peripheral parts of the body) of oxygen and nutrients. Left untreated, the disease can lead to amputation.

Healthy peripheral arteries are smooth and unobstructed, allowing blood to freely provide the legs with oxygen, glucose and other nutrients. As we age, peripheral arteries build up plaque, a sticky substance made up mostly of fat and cholesterol. Plaque narrows the passageway within the arteries and causes them to become stiff.

A moderate blockage in one of arteries in a major leg muscle, such as the calf or thigh, can cause pain when walking. This pain can be temporarily decreased with rest, but will set up again with more walking or activity.

Lower extremity pain, similar to angina, is called claudication by medical providers. The pain itself is not life-threatening but it is a sign that the person should make lifestyle changes and see a doctor. Examples of possible treatments include smoking cessation, daily exercise and medical management.

If the disease becomes more severe, the limb can be deprived of blood nutrients and the patient begins to suffer pain at rest, especially at night. Sores that won't heal may develop on the feet. This is a very concerning sign for losing toes or even amputation of the leg. An urgent referral to a vascular surgeon is necessary to prevent limb loss in this situation.

Illustrations:

- **Healthy artery:** Blood artery unobstructed by plaque.
- **Artery narrowed by plaque:** Intermittent claudication (leg pain) occurs in lower leg.
- **Artery narrowed by plaque:** Artery narrowed by plaque.

SVS | Society for Vascular Surgery | SVS | Foundation | For more information visit vascular.org

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)

If you get leg cramps when you walk, it may be a sign of PAD. Learn more about keeping your legs healthy.

Enfermedad Arterial Periferical



Physical Activity and Vascular Health

Exercise can benefit vascular patients in many ways. It may reduce the risk of stroke, helps those with PAD avoid interventions, and decreases the growth rate of AAAs.

Actividad Fisica y Salud Vascular



Smoking and Vascular Disease

Cigarette smoking accelerates the hardening and narrowing of arteries. In smokers, that process starts earlier and blood clots are two to four times more likely.

Fumar y Enfermedad Vascular

WHAT IS VASCULAR DISEASE?

YOUR VASCULAR HEALTH

The body contains an amazing circulatory system of arteries and veins. Arteries bring oxygen-rich blood from the heart to every inch of the body, while veins take the blood back to the heart and lungs for more oxygen.

Most people think that heart disease can occur when blood vessels become clogged with plaque and cholesterol, but many are unaware that the same problem, often called hardening of the arteries or atherosclerosis, can occur in any artery of the body.

These problems occur in the arteries, often resulting in leg swelling, chest pain, stroke, heart attack and chronic leg problems.

Common types of ARTERY DISEASE include:

- Coronary artery disease and stroke:** A build-up of plaque in the walls lining arteries to the heart. Patients who have had a stroke, a transient ischemic attack (TIA) or have been told they have an abnormal carotid or other artery, will be referred to a vascular surgeon for diagnosis and possible treatment.
- Aneurysms:** An aneurysm is a bulging in a weakened part of an artery. They most often occur in the brain, but can also occur in the aorta, which is the body's biggest artery, coming from the heart through the abdomen. Aneurysms can also occur in the pelvis or the knee. They can enlarge when the blood flow pushes against the weakened wall. In the aorta and pelvis, ruptured arteries can be fatal.
- Peripheral arterial disease (PAD):** Patients with hardening of the arteries start to feel blood flow in the limbs, usually in the legs, more than when walking. But as the disease progresses, it can cause painful foot ulcers, infections and toe gangrene, which could require amputation. People with PAD are three times more likely to die of heart attack or stroke than those without PAD.

SVS | Society for Vascular Surgery | For more information visit vascular.org

What is Vascular Disease?

Heart disease can occur when the arteries are clogged with plaque and cholesterol, but that same problem can occur in any artery of the body.

Que es la Enfermedad Vasculr?

VARICOSE VEINS

YOUR VASCULAR HEALTH

Varicose veins occur when leg veins bulge, causing them to be twisted or lumpy. The veins under the surface of the leg move blood away from the leg down to the heart, but pressure is built up in the veins, causing them to bulge.

As many as 40 million Americans have varicose veins. Left untreated, varicose veins may become worse. Patients with varicose veins often experience leg aches and fatigue. They may also have skin changes, such as ulcers, rashes and sores.

What factors influence development of VARICOSE VEINS?

- Age: Blood pressure, changes of fat and cholesterol levels, and other factors can contribute to the development of varicose veins. It is most common in older adults.
- Genetics: Some people have a family history of varicose veins.
- Other factors that can influence the development of varicose veins include:
 - Being obese
 - Being pregnant
 - Standing or sitting for long periods of time

It is important to seek medical attention for a proper exam and treatment. You may be able to manage symptoms with lifestyle changes, such as wearing compression stockings to improve blood flow. The surgeon can also help improve blood flow to reduce the swelling and pain. The most important procedure involves the use of minimally-invasive techniques.

Most doctors will suggest lifestyle changes for patients with varicose veins:

- Exercising
- Controlling the proper weight
- Wearing high-heeled shoes
- Not sitting or standing for long periods of time
- Wearing compression stockings

SVS | Society for Vascular Surgery | For more information visit vascular.org

Varicose Veins

Up to 40 million Americans have varicose veins. Left untreated, the veins may become worse.

Venas Varicosas

Learn more about vascular disease