



Testing Center

WHAT IS PAD ?

Poor circulation in the legs may be caused by a condition known as Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD). When the arteries to your legs or any other part of your body begin to narrow from plaque, the flow of blood is restricted. (Plaque is a buildup of cholesterol and other materials in the wall of your arteries.) If plaque ruptures, microscopic particles in the blood can clump together, causing clots to form. When a clot blocks the flow of blood to your heart or brain, it can cause a heart attack or stroke.

RISK FACTORS:

- Smoking or history of smoking
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Overweight/obesity
- Family history
- Age (Over 50 yrs. with other risk factors)

SYMPTOMS:

Only a third of the people with PAD feel any pain or discomfort. Symptoms of PAD include pain, cramps, a tired feeling or heaviness in legs or buttocks when exercising or even when just walking a short distance.

Another sign is that the pain or discomfort most likely eases after rest. Other symptoms include:

- *Changes in skin color (pale, bluish, or reddish discoloration)*
- *Changes in skin temperature, coolness*
- *Impotence*
- *Uncontrolled hypertension*
- *Skin ulcers*

PAD STUDY:

In diagnosing PAD your doctor may order a test called a PAD study. This study involves an Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) and Pulse Volume Recording (PVR). The ABI compares blood pressure readings in your arms and ankles. The PVR measures pulse volume changes in your blood vessels.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

The PAD study takes about 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete. You will lie down on the exam table and the PAD Technician will place blood pressure cuffs on each arm and four cuffs on each leg. One will be above the knee, one on the calf, one on the ankle and one on the toe. Measurements are taken with each cuff one at a time. Patients will also do a short exercise involving either a treadmill or toe lifts.

TEST RESULTS:

The exam is sent to a vascular surgeon to be overread for interpretation, the results will be faxed or sent by interoffice mail to the ordering physician who will then call you with the results. The ordering physician will receive the results 7-10 days after the test is performed.