

Dr. Carmel Celestin Sheds Light on Peripheral Artery Disease Awareness Month

Awareness, Prevention, and Living Well



Las Vegas, Nevada Sep 2, 2025 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - September marks Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Month, a vital time to spotlight this often-overlooked condition that affects millions. Approximately twenty percent of people with risk factors have this disease, and many are not aware of it. As we draw attention to the importance of awareness and prevention, it's essential to empower ourselves with knowledge and the tools for living well. PAD can lead to severe complications, yet it is manageable with early detection and lifestyle adjustments. Whether you or a loved one is affected, fostering a supportive community and sharing experiences can significantly enhance quality of life.

Understanding Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)

Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) is a common circulatory problem in which narrowed arteries reduce blood flow to your limbs. The arteries supply oxygen to the body and its organs. This condition, often a result of atherosclerosis, can lead to severe health issues if left untreated. Atherosclerosis is the build-up of fatty deposits (plaque) in your arteries, which causes them to narrow and harden. When this occurs in the arteries that supply blood to your limbs, it results in PAD. The reduced blood flow can cause pain, mobility issues, and even increase the risk of heart attack and stroke, making it a critical health concern that warrants our full attention. In the early stages, there may be no symptoms. PAD typically affects the legs, causing symptoms such as leg pain when walking, known as claudication. Claudication occurs because your muscles aren't getting enough blood flow to keep up with the demand during activity. The pain usually disappears after a few minutes of rest. However, as PAD progresses, you might feel leg pain even when you're at rest. This condition can also lead to non-healing wounds or ulcers on the feet or toes. If left untreated, PAD can result in serious complications, including gangrene and amputation. Understanding PAD is the first step in combating it. Knowledge about the causes, symptoms, and potential outcomes of PAD can equip individuals with the information they need to seek early intervention. With timely medical attention and lifestyle changes, many of the complications associated with PAD can be prevented. Education and awareness play pivotal roles in managing this condition effectively and improving the quality of life for those affected.

Importance of Peripheral Artery Disease Month

Peripheral Artery Disease Month, observed every September, is a crucial initiative aimed at raising awareness about this pervasive yet often underdiagnosed condition. The month-long campaign focuses on educating the public, healthcare professionals, and policymakers about the impact of PAD, emphasizing the importance of early detection and prevention. By highlighting PAD's prevalence and potential severity, the initiative seeks to encourage proactive health measures and facilitate better outcomes for those at risk. One of the key goals of Peripheral Artery Disease Month is to debunk myths and misconceptions surrounding the condition. Many people mistakenly believe that PAD is a rare or benign issue, which can lead to delayed diagnosis and treatment. By providing accurate information and sharing personal stories, the campaign helps to paint a realistic picture of what living with PAD entails. This increased understanding can prompt individuals to seek medical advice if they have risk factors or experience symptoms, ultimately leading to earlier interventions and improved prognosis. Furthermore, Peripheral Artery Disease Month serves as a platform for advocacy and support. It brings together patients, caregivers, healthcare providers, and organizations dedicated to fighting PAD. This collective effort fosters a sense of community and shared purpose, encouraging individuals to take an active role in their health and support others in their journey.

Symptoms and Risk Factors of PAD

Recognizing the symptoms and risk factors of Peripheral Artery Disease is crucial for early diagnosis and intervention. PAD often manifests through a range of symptoms that can vary in intensity and

frequency. One of the most common symptoms is claudication, which is characterized by muscle pain or cramping in the legs or arms that occurs during physical activity and goes away with rest. This pain typically affects the calves but can also be felt in the thighs, hips, or buttocks. As the disease progresses, individuals may experience pain even when at rest, indicating more severe arterial blockage. Many times, these symptoms are usually thought to be due to arthritis. Other symptoms of PAD include weakness in the legs and sores or ulcers on the toes, feet, or legs that don't heal. Some individuals may notice a change in the color of their legs, such as becoming pale or bluish, and a decrease in the growth of toenails and leg hair. Erectile dysfunction in men can also be a symptom of PAD. It's important to note that not everyone with PAD will exhibit symptoms, which underscores the importance of regular screenings, particularly for those at higher risk. Several risk factors increase the likelihood of developing PAD. Smoking is one of the most significant risk factors, as it contributes to the narrowing and hardening of the arteries. Other risk factors include diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and a family history of cardiovascular disease. Age is also a factor, with individuals over 50 being at greater risk. Additionally, people of African descent, those with a sedentary lifestyle, obesity, or poor dietary habits, are more susceptible to PAD. Understanding these risk factors can help individuals and healthcare providers prioritize screenings and preventive measures, especially given that in the early stages, there may be no symptoms at all.

The Role of Awareness in PAD Prevention

Awareness plays a pivotal role in the prevention and management of Peripheral Artery Disease. By educating the public about the signs, symptoms, and risk factors of PAD, we can encourage individuals to seek medical advice and adopt healthier lifestyles. Increased awareness can lead to earlier diagnosis, which is critical in preventing the progression of the disease and reducing the risk of serious complications such as heart attack, stroke, and limb amputation.

Effective Prevention Strategies for PAD

Preventing Peripheral Artery Disease involves addressing the modifiable risk factors that contribute to its development. One of the most effective prevention strategies is smoking cessation. Smoking is a major risk factor for PAD, as it damages the blood vessels and accelerates the progression of atherosclerosis. Quitting smoking can significantly reduce the risk of developing PAD and improve overall cardiovascular health. Support groups, counseling, nicotine replacement therapies, medications, and some behavioral interventions can help individuals quit smoking and maintain a smoke-free lifestyle. Adopting a healthy diet is another crucial prevention strategy. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats can help reduce the risk of PAD by managing cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and blood sugar. Limiting the intake of saturated fats, trans fats, sodium, and added sugars is essential for maintaining healthy arteries. Additionally, incorporating foods high in fiber and antioxidants can support cardiovascular health and reduce inflammation, further protecting against PAD. Regular physical activity is also vital in preventing PAD. Exercise helps improve blood flow, reduce blood pressure, and maintain a healthy weight. Aerobic activities, such as walking, cycling, and swimming, are particularly beneficial for cardiovascular health. Strength training exercises can also help build and maintain muscle mass, which is important for overall mobility and function. Engaging in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week is recommended for optimal health benefits.

Lifestyle Changes to Manage PAD

For individuals diagnosed with Peripheral Artery Disease, making lifestyle changes is essential for managing the condition and improving quality of life. This is regardless of if interventions such as medications and procedures are used in the treatment. One of the most important lifestyle adjustments

is engaging in regular physical activity. Exercise can help improve circulation, reduce symptoms, and enhance overall cardiovascular health. Supervised exercise programs, such as walking regimens, are often recommended for individuals with PAD. These programs can help increase walking distance and reduce pain associated with claudication. Dietary modifications are also crucial for managing PAD. A heart-healthy diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats can help control risk factors such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Reducing the intake of saturated fats, trans fats, sodium, and added sugars is important for maintaining healthy arteries. Additionally, staying hydrated and limiting alcohol consumption can support overall vascular health. Managing stress is another important aspect of living well with PAD. Chronic stress can negatively impact cardiovascular health and exacerbate PAD symptoms. Techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, deep breathing exercises, and yoga can help reduce stress and promote relaxation. Engaging in hobbies and activities that bring joy and fulfillment can also improve mental and emotional well-being. Building a strong support network of family, friends, and healthcare professionals can provide encouragement and motivation to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The Importance of Regular Check-Ups and Screenings

Regular check-ups and screenings are vital for the early detection and management of Peripheral Artery Disease. Routine medical examinations allow healthcare providers to monitor risk factors, assess symptoms, and conduct necessary tests to diagnose PAD. Early detection is crucial for preventing the progression of the disease and reducing the risk of serious complications. Regular check-ups also provide an opportunity for individuals to discuss any concerns or changes in their health with their healthcare provider. One of the primary diagnostic tools for PAD is the Ankle-Brachial Index (ABI) test. This non-invasive test compares the blood pressure in the ankle with the blood pressure in the arm to determine how well blood is flowing. An ABI test can identify blockages or narrowing in the arteries and is often used as an initial screening tool for PAD. If the ABI test indicates PAD, further diagnostic tests, such as ultrasound, angiography, CAT scan, or magnetic resonance angiography (MRA), may be conducted to assess the extent of the disease. Regular screenings are particularly important for individuals with risk factors for PAD, such as smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and a family history of cardiovascular disease. Healthcare providers may recommend more frequent screenings for these individuals to ensure early detection and timely intervention. By prioritizing regular check-ups and screenings, individuals can take proactive steps to manage their health and reduce the risk of PAD-related complications.

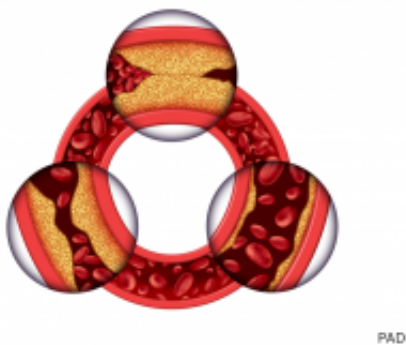
Resources for PAD Patients and Caregivers

For individuals living with Peripheral Artery Disease and their caregivers, accessing reliable resources and support is essential for managing the condition and improving quality of life. Numerous organizations and websites offer valuable information, educational materials, and support services for PAD patients and their caregivers. These resources can provide guidance on treatment options, lifestyle changes, and coping strategies, as well as connect individuals with support groups and healthcare professionals. The [Society for Vascular Medicine \(SVM\)](#), [American Heart Association \(AHA\)](#), and the [American College of Cardiology \(ACC\)](#) are prominent organizations that offer extensive resources on PAD. Their websites feature detailed information on the causes, symptoms, and treatment of PAD, as well as tips for prevention and management. They also provide tools such as risk assessment calculators, interactive guides, and educational videos. Additionally, these organizations often host events and webinars focused on PAD awareness and education. Support groups and online communities can also be invaluable resources for PAD patients and caregivers. Connecting with others who are experiencing similar challenges can provide emotional support, encouragement, and practical advice. Many organizations and hospitals offer in-person and virtual support groups where individuals

can share their experiences and learn from others. Online forums and social media groups also provide opportunities to connect with a broader community and access a wealth of shared knowledge and resources.

Conclusion and Call to Action for Awareness

As we observe Peripheral Artery Disease Month, it is essential to recognize the significance of raising awareness and promoting prevention strategies. PAD is a serious condition that can lead to severe complications if left untreated, which extend beyond the legs and involve the heart and brain, but with early detection and proper management, individuals can live well and maintain a high quality of life. Share information with family, friends, and colleagues, and encourage them to prioritize regular check-ups and screenings.



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