



# Peripheral Vascular Disease

Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD), also known as Peripheral Arterial Disease and is often described as hardening of the arteries of the legs.

PVD occurs in the arteries that supply the legs with blood and the main symptom is pain in one or both legs when you walk.



Podiatry & Foot Healthcare

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# What causes Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD)?

Narrowing of the arteries is caused by atheroma, which is like fatty patches (plaques) that can develop within the inside lining of the arteries. Although a patch of atheroma starts quite small, and may cause no problem at first, over several years, the atheroma can become thicker, effectively scaling-up the inside of your arteries. This makes the artery narrower, reducing blood flow through that section of the artery. Downstream of this reduced blood supply is where the symptoms and problems can occur. Although Atheroma can develop in any artery, the common arteries affected are:

- Arteries taking blood to the legs, which can lead to PVD, ulcers & gangrene
- Arteries taking blood to the heart, and this is caused coronary heart disease and may lead to angina and heart attacks
- Arteries taking blood to the brain, which can lead to a stroke

The risk factors of developing atheroma are: Smoking, Obesity, Lack of Physical Activity, Excess Alcohol Consumption and an Unhealthy Diet.

## Treatment and Prevention for Peripheral Vascular Disease

Treatable, or partially treatable risk factors include:

- High Blood Pressure
- High Cholesterol Levels
- High Fat (Triglyceride) Blood Levels
- Diabetes
- Kidney Disease

Lifestyle risk factors that should be prevented or changed include:

- Smoking - if you smoke, this creates the greatest risk
- Lack of physical activity - increase activity levels
- Obesity - being overweight increases the risk
- An unhealthy diet increases the risk
- Drinking excess alcohol contributes to the risk and should be avoided

There are however, some risk factors that we cannot avoid:

- Family history of PVD
- Being male increases risk
- Early menopause (women)
- Age increases risk
- Ancestry - Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka have an increased risk



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The general information provided here does not constitute medical advice. You should consult with a suitably qualified foot health care clinician.

Please contact your nearest *We Fix Feet* clinic to book your consultation.