

PAD TREATMENT: PREPARING FOR FEMORAL BYPASS SURGERY

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When you have peripheral artery disease, your healthcare provider may recommend a procedure called femoral bypass surgery to create a new route for blood to flow in your legs.

Your healthcare provider will give you specific instructions on how to prepare for your surgery, but here are some general guidelines:

Be honest about all the medications you are taking. You may be asked to stop taking certain medications, including vitamins and supplements, several days before your treatment. And bring a list of your medications with you to the hospital for your healthcare team to review prior to your procedure.

It is important to let your healthcare team know as early as possible if you are allergic to latex, anesthesia, iodine or contrast agents, antibiotics or shellfish.

The night before the procedure you may be asked not to eat or drink anything after midnight. If you are told to continue to take certain medications, take them on schedule, with as little water as possible.

You may be asked to arrive a few hours before the procedure is scheduled. If not already done, any remaining pre-procedure tests will be completed.

Before the procedure, you will be attached to monitors that track your heart rate, blood pressure and pulse. An I.V. will be started to provide you with fluids and medication during the procedure.

If you are given a spinal anesthesia, you will not be able to feel your leg during surgery. If you are given a general anesthesia, you will be asleep during your surgery.

During femoral bypass surgery, a healthy vessel taken from the leg or arm, or an artificial vessel, is grafted onto the artery above and below the narrowed or blocked portion. This new pathway bypasses the blockage, restoring blood flow to that part of the body.

Femoral bypass surgery usually takes 2 to 3 hours and you will stay in the hospital for 1 to 3 days.

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During your hospital stay, nurses, doctors and other hospital staff will closely monitor your progress. They will check your blood pressure, temperature and heart rate regularly. To monitor blood flow through the new bypass, hospital staff will check the pulses in your legs, and the color and temperature of your skin.

Your I.V. will continue to deliver nutrients, blood pressure medications and special medications to control bleeding.

As your anesthesia wears off, you will notice the incision site feels sore. Gradually, this pain will go away; but until it does, take your pain medications as directed.

When your healthcare team feels you are ready, you will start to move around more and will be encouraged to get out of bed and walk short distances.

As you get stronger, you will be able to go home. But you are not yet fully recovered. Have someone drive you home and stay with you for the first few days of your recovery at home.

If you have any questions about femoral bypass surgery – how to prepare, what to expect, or about your recovery – meet with your healthcare provider. This procedure is necessary to prevent the long-term complications of PAD. Your healthcare provider wants you to feel comfortable and prepared for your treatment.