

PAD Treatment: What is Angioplasty?

For some people with peripheral artery disease, or PAD, angioplasty may be needed to restore blood flow through the peripheral arteries (they are called peripheral arteries because they move blood outside of the heart), and prevent the long-term complications of PAD.

During the angioplasty procedure a catheter with a tiny balloon attached to it, will be guided through the artery to the narrowed spot.

The balloon presses the plaque against the artery walls, widening the artery so that blood flows easily again. The balloon is then removed.

If needed, your doctor may also implant a small metal device, called a stent, into the artery.

Using a catheter, the stent will be moved to the spot where the plaque was compressed and inflated to expand the stent against the artery wall.

The stent will stay in place providing structural support and reducing the risk that this part of the artery will narrow again.

The angioplasty and stenting procedures usually take about one hour.

It can be done on an out-patient basis, which means you will go home the same day, or during a stay in the hospital.

PAD is serious. It is a warning sign that you are at risk for serious health problems including heart attack and stroke. Angioplasty and stenting can restore blood flow to your neck, arms, and legs and reduce both the symptoms and the complications of PAD.