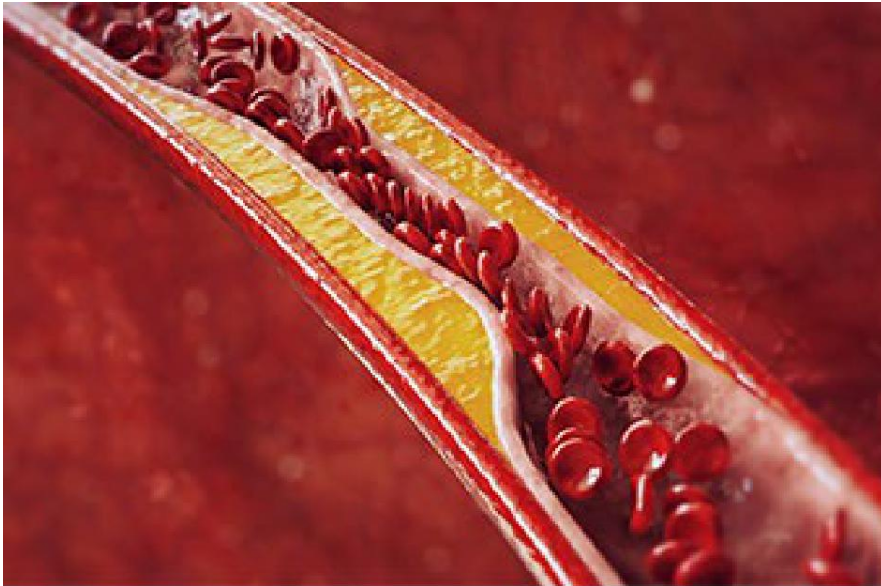




Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)



Overview

This narrowing of arteries reduces blood flow to your arms or legs. It most often affects the legs and feet. Smoking and diabetes raise your risk for this disease. So do obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, age and other factors.

Causes

What causes arteries to narrow? Mostly, it's caused by atherosclerosis. That's a buildup of sticky plaque on the walls of your arteries. PAD may be caused by something else. It could happen because of injury. It could be a problem with the anatomy of your ligaments or muscles. Or, it could be linked to some other problem.

Symptoms

What are the symptoms? Well, some people have no symptoms. Others have things like cramping, weakness, numbness and pain, commonly in the legs. You can have skin changes and sores that won't heal. These problems may get worse over time. Ask your doctor for a full list of symptoms.

Treatment

How do we treat it? Treatment often begins with a healthier lifestyle. So eat a healthy diet. Be sure to get exercise every day. And if you smoke, quit. We may also control this disease with medications. If you have a severe blockage, we recommend a procedure to open the blockage or divert blood around it. Your doctor will create a plan that's right for you.