

Diabetes and Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)

How does having diabetes affect my arteries?

High blood sugar (glucose) levels make your arteries thick, narrow and rough inside. This makes it harder for the blood to flow through the arteries. Also when the blood flow to your legs or feet is reduced, it takes longer for cuts or wounds to heal. This may increase the risk of losing a foot or leg, which is called amputation.

People with PAD **and** diabetes are at a higher risk for having a heart attack, stroke or dying at a younger age.

How to control diabetes?

- Ask your doctor what your blood sugar level should be.
- Ask your doctor to refer you to a dietitian or go to a diabetes clinic.
- Exercise regularly.

For more information about what foods are right for you, ask for a copy of the handout, "Just the Basics" from the Canadian Diabetes Association or you can find a copy on their website www.diabetes.ca.

Not all people with diabetes need to take medication. They can control their diabetes with diet and exercise.

Medications for diabetes

There are many types of medications to help control your blood sugar levels. Some are in a pill form and others need to be given as an injection. Your doctor will decide which type of medication you need for your diabetes.

Many people take more than one medication for their diabetes. Your doctor will work with you to find the one(s) that are right for you.

Tips for taking your blood sugar medication:

- Take your medication as told to you by your doctor even if your blood sugar returns to normal.
- Do not stop taking your medication without talking to your doctor.
- If you are feeling unwell after starting your medication, talk to your doctor right away. You should not feel differently after taking the medication.

My blood sugar level while I was in the hospital was: _____

My medications for diabetes are: _____

Talk to your doctor about your diabetes.

Nurse's notes:

Questions for my family doctor:

Helpful websites:

Peripheral Arterial Disease Coalition www.padcoalition.org
Canadian Diabetes Association www.diabetes.ca