

What is Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD)?

Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD), also known as peripheral arterial disease, is a condition caused when the arteries in the legs become blocked and prevent the flow of blood or oxygen to the limbs. Arteries are the blood vessels that carry oxygen and nutrient-rich blood from the heart to all areas of the body. PVD occurs in the vessels that carry blood to the arms and legs.

PVD usually occurs because of the accumulation of fatty deposits in the arteries (called atherosclerosis), which reduces the blood flow to the heart, brain and legs. Early diagnosis and treatment can prevent PVD from getting worse and also can help reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke.



Our Mission

With caring and compassion, we will improve the health and quality of life of the people we serve.

For more than 80 years, Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center has grown along with the community, evolving into one of the region's premier healthcare providers.



- 1 – Hospital Main Entrance / Heart Center
- 2 – Emergency Department / Chest Pain Center
- 3 – Marcia Ray Breast Center
- 4 – Colorectal Surgery Institute
- 5 – Women's Center
- 6 – Peripheral Vascular Clinic

For a physician referral or a second opinion, call Doctor Finder, Glendale Memorial's free physician referral service, at (818) 502-2378.



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Diagnosis and Treatment of PVD

If you are having any of the symptoms for PVD, it is important to seek medical attention right away. Early detection of PVD is important so the right treatment can be provided in a timely manner. Talk to your physician for proper diagnosis and treatment.

There are several treatment options for PVD — please seek proper medical attention to determine the best treatment option for you. Lifestyle changes to help reduce risk factors, medications to lower cholesterol and high blood pressure, and interventional procedures are the treatments available for PVD.



What are the Symptoms?

Some people with PVD may have mild or no symptoms at first, but about one in 10 experience leg pain when walking. This pain is called Intermittent Claudication (IC), which is discomfort or pain in the legs that happens while walking and goes away when at rest. The location of the pain depends on the location of the clogged or narrowed artery, but calf pain is most common. Also the severity of IC varies, from mild discomfort to debilitating pain, while severe IC can prevent physical activity altogether.

Signs and symptoms of PVD include:

- Painful cramping in the hip, thigh or calf muscles after walking or climbing stairs
- Leg numbness or weakness
- Coldness in the lower leg or foot, especially when compared with the other leg
- Sores on the toes, feet or legs that won't heal
- A change in the color of the legs
- Hair loss on the feet and legs
- Changes to toenails

What Causes PVD?

The most common cause of PVD is atherosclerosis—plaque build-up in the artery walls that reduces the blood flow. It is common to hear of atherosclerosis in the arteries leading to the heart, but plaque also can exist in arteries throughout the body. When this plaque build-up occurs in the arteries supplying blood to the limbs, it causes PVD.

As people age, the risk of developing PVD increases. Those older than 50 years have an increased risk of developing PVD, and men have a greater risk than women.

Other risk factors of PVD include:

- Smoking
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol or triglycerides
- Obesity
- A family history of peripheral artery disease, heart disease or stroke
- Previous history of heart disease or stroke

