



# MAKING EVERY MINUTE COUNT

Bring this to your next doctor's appointment

Are you at risk for P.A.D. (Peripheral Artery Disease)? Review the list of risk factors below, and if you check even **one** box, your next step should be a discussion with your doctor about P.A.D. and getting tested. One commonly used test is called the Ankle-Brachial Index or A.B.I. test. It's a simple test done in your doctor's office, takes only a few minutes, and is used to detect P.A.D. So the first thing you want to do before your appointment is review your risk factors. Remember, the more information you have, the more productive your doctor's visit will be. After all, the average office appointment is only about 15 minutes.

Print and take this information with you to your next visit — it can help guide the conversation and questions.

## Before

### 4 things to do to prepare for your visit

#### 1. Check your risk factors

You should know the factors that may be putting you at risk for P.A.D. and the associated risk of heart attack or stroke. Talking to your doctor about them will show your doctor you're taking an active role in your health.

#### Check any risk factors you may have.\*

You are over 50 and:

- Have diabetes
- Have high cholesterol
- Have high blood pressure (hypertension)
- Have a family history of cardiovascular disease
- Smoke or used to smoke
- You are over 70
- You have pain in your legs while walking that eases after rest, or pain in your legs at rest

\* There are other risk factors. Talk to your doctor.

#### 2. Collect information and set goals

Take some time before your visit to pull together any important information you need to share with your doctor. Include things like updates to your medical history, a list of medications you are taking (prescription and over the counter), and any relevant medical records. We have included an area on page 4 for you to list your current medications.

### 3. Do some research

Find out about P.A.D., the risk factors, and the terminology. That kind of information will help you and your doctor speak the same language. “*Recognizing and Understanding the Risk*” is important information that can help you get started. It can be downloaded from PADFacts.com.

### 4. Think about how you talk to your doctor

Be honest. Be specific. Be brief. This will lead to a more focused and effective conversation. Be sure to bring up your health concerns—for now and for the long term. You can write down some of the things you think about in the section included on page 4 and refer to it during your visit.



## During

### 3 things to do during your visit

#### 1. Focus on why you're there—to get tested

If you have even **one** risk factor for P.A.D., your goal should be to get tested. Share the information you've collected with your doctor and discuss your risk factors for P.A.D. Let your doctor know specifically what's bothering you, if you're in pain, and how long you've been feeling that way. You'll want to ask any questions you have about testing for P.A.D., and if you're diagnosed, how to reduce your risk for a heart attack or stroke. Remember to discuss lifestyle changes as well as treatment options.

#### 2. Make sure you understand your doctor

If you don't know what your doctor is talking about, be sure to say that you don't understand—right away. Otherwise, your doctor may assume that you “get it.” And you need to understand your doctor in order to follow any treatment plan correctly.

#### 3. Take notes and bring a friend

Taking notes can help when you're trying to remember everything your doctor tells you. Use the area on page 4 to take your notes. Bringing a friend with you can help boost your confidence, and a friend can help you fill in blanks and remember details from the visit.



## Questions to ask your doctor about P.A.D.

Asking your doctor some key questions is a great place to start.

1. Could I still have P.A.D. even if I feel fine?

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2. Why does P.A.D. increase the risk of having a heart attack or stroke? Does that risk ever go away?

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3. Are there lifestyle changes I can make to help reduce my risk of heart attack or stroke?

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4. Do I have risk factors I can manage to help reduce my risk?

*(check all that apply)*

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- High cholesterol
- Smoking

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5. Should I be tested for P.A.D.?

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### And, if you are diagnosed with P.A.D.:

6. What causes a heart attack or stroke?

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7. What is an antiplatelet medication?

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8. Are all medications for heart attack or stroke the same?

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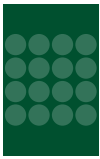
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9. How long should I continue taking my medications if I am diagnosed with P.A.D.?

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# Notes

My current medications:

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Notes:

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A.B.I. test results: \_\_\_\_\_



# After

## Things to do after your visit

Reducing your risk of heart attack or stroke is serious—and ongoing. So your time between visits is very important as well. Here are some things to remember:

- **Prescriptions:** be sure to fill them and take them as your doctor prescribed, and if you have any questions, call and ask
- **Follow-up tests or appointments:** schedule them and don't miss them
- **Questions:** have a place that you write down questions or thoughts you have and bring them with you to your next appointment