Talking to Your Doctor about Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)

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En Español (Spanish Version)

You have a unique medical history. Therefore, it is essential to talk with your doctor about your personal risk factors and/or experience with peripheral artery disease. By talking openly and regularly with your doctor, you can take an active role in your care.

General Tips for Gathering Information

Here are some tips that will make it easier for you to talk to your doctor:

- Bring someone else with you. It helps to have another person hear what is said and think of things you may have missed.
- Write out your questions ahead of time, so you don't forget them.
- Write down the answers you get, and make sure you understand what you are hearing. Ask for clarification, if necessary.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions and learn where you can find more information about what you are discussing. You have a right to know.

Specific Questions to Ask Your Doctor

About Your Risk of Developing Symptomatic Disease

- How soon, if at all, can I expect to develop symptoms from my peripheral artery disease?

About Your Risk of Developing Severe Complications

- How likely is it that I will have complications like infection or gangrene?

About Treatment Options

- Do you recommend I see a podiatrist for foot care and advice?
- What medications do you recommend?
  - What effects, both positive and negative, can I expect?
  - Will they interact with anything I am already taking?
  - How long will I have to take them?
- Are there alternative therapies that have been shown to help treat peripheral artery disease?
- When or under what circumstances should I consider an invasive procedure?

About Lifestyle Changes

- Am I doing all I can to address the causes of this condition to help keep it from getting worse?
- Please give me the information I need to engage in a proper, safe exercise program.

About Outlook

- What can I expect in the future?

REFERENCES:

American Association of Neurological Surgeons website. Available at: http://www.aans.org/.


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