
Dr. T Muthambi

Issue No 7 | July 2022



In the month of July, I discuss peripheral vascular surgery. Peripheral vascular surgery is the surgical treatment of peripheral vascular disease. When you have this disease, the blood vessels leading to the arms and legs are narrowed or clogged, so blood struggles to get through.

Peripheral Vascular Surgery

Peripheral vascular surgery is the surgical treatment of peripheral artery disease. When you have this disease, the blood vessels leading to the arms and legs are narrowed or clogged, so blood struggles to get through. Blood carries oxygen, which is essential for the normal functioning of all the tissues of the human body. If the peripheral disease decreases blood flow to your arms or legs, you may experience pain and difficulty with movement. Decreased blood flow to the limbs also increases the risk of tissue death, which may require amputation.

Doctors recommend peripheral vascular surgery for patients that have not responded to noninvasive treatments. Common forms of peripheral vascular surgery include endarterectomy and peripheral vascular bypass surgery. The goals of peripheral artery interventions are to improve circulation, decrease pain, improve limb function, and prevent amputation.

Peripheral vascular surgery

Symptoms

- Leg numbness or weakness
- No pulse or a weak pulse in the legs or feet
- Painful cramping in one or both of the hips, thighs, or calf muscles after certain activities, such as walking or climbing stairs
- Shiny skin on the legs
- Skin color changes on the legs
- Sores on the toes, feet, or legs that won't heal
- Pain when using the arms, such as aching and cramping when knitting, writing, or doing other manual tasks
- Erectile dysfunction
- Hair loss or slower hair growth on the legs.

Many people have mild or no symptoms and some people experience pain when walking.

Diagnosis

The ankle-brachial pressure index test is widely used to diagnose peripheral artery disease, as well as assess how well you're responding to treatment. In most cases, your surgeon will be able to confirm a diagnosis by doing a physical examination.

Further testing might be required if there is an uncertainty about your diagnosis.

Treatment

To treat peripheral vascular disease two surgeries can be performed namely a bypass or an endarterectomy. Your surgeon will discuss the best option for you.

During an endarterectomy, the surgeon opens the affected blood vessel and scrapes out any plaque blocking the vessel. The surgeon may also remove diseased portions of the blood vessel and reconnect the healthy sections to facilitate blood flow. This procedure takes 2 to 3 hours.

During peripheral vascular bypass, your surgeon creates a new route for blood flow. Your surgeon will use either a portion of one of your healthy blood vessels or a blood vessel made of synthetic fabric to create the new route and bypass the blocked and diseased artery. The decision to use a natural or artificial blood vessel depends on your overall health and the health of your blood vessels. A Bypass takes 2 to 4 hours. Both the endarterectomy and the bypass are done under general anesthesia.

You are more than welcomed to get in contact with me my details are below.

reception.drmuthambi@gmail.com

011 950 5911

www.specialistgeneralsurgeon.co.za

