

# Peripheral Artery Disease Discharge Information

## What is peripheral artery disease?

Peripheral artery disease means that one or more of the arteries that supply blood to the arms or legs are narrowed or blocked. The narrowing or blockage reduces blood flow to the arms or legs. Symptoms, which may include pain, coldness, or skin sores that do not heal well, are more common in the legs. Many people may have pain even while they are resting. However, some people may only notice pain with exercise or activity.

## How can I take care of myself when I go home?

How long it takes to get better depends your treatment, how well you recover, your overall health, and any complications you may have.

### Management

- Your provider will give you a list of your medicines when you leave the hospital.
  - Know your medicines. Know what they look like, how much you should take each time, how often you should take them, and why you take each one.
  - Take your medicines exactly as your provider tells you to.
  - Carry a list of your medicines in your wallet or purse. Include any nonprescription medicines and supplements on the list.
- Ask your provider if you should take aspirin. Low-dose aspirin therapy reduces the risk of stroke for women. For men, aspirin has been found to lower the risk of a first-time heart attack.
- Your provider may prescribe medicine to:
  - Treat pain
  - Treat or prevent an infection
  - Relax and widen blood vessels and allow blood to flow through them easier
  - Help prevent blood clots
  - Slow the heart rate and reduce the workload of the heart
  - Control cholesterol levels
  - Reduce fluid build-up and swelling in the body
- If you have had surgery, to care for your incision:
  - Keep your incision clean.
  - If you are told to change your dressing on your incision, wash your hands before changing the dressing and after disposing of the dressing.

### Appointments

- Follow your provider's instructions for follow-up appointments and routine tests.
- Keep appointments for all routine testing you may need.
- Talk with your provider about any questions or fears you have.

### **Diet, Exercise, and Other Lifestyle Changes**

- Follow the treatment plan your healthcare provider prescribes.
- Get plenty of rest while you're recovering. Try to get at least 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night.
- Drink enough fluids to keep your urine light yellow in color, unless you are told to limit fluids.
- Exercise as your provider recommends.
- Don't smoke. Smoking can worsen peripheral artery disease.
- You will probably need to make changes in some of the foods you eat. Ask your provider about the benefits of talking to a dietician to learn what you need in a healthy diet.
- Ask your healthcare provider if there are any foods or medicines you should avoid.
- Lose weight if you need to and keep a healthy weight.
- Find ways to make your life less stressful.
- Follow activity restrictions, such as not driving or operating machinery, as recommended by your healthcare provider or pharmacist, especially if you are taking pain medicines or muscle relaxants.

### **Call emergency medical services or 911 if you have new or worsening:**

- Severe bleeding or bruising or bleeding that does not stop
- Bluish color and coldness in your arm or leg
- Chest discomfort (pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain) that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back or chest discomfort that goes to your arms, neck, jaw or back
- Severe shortness of breath
- Weakness, numbness, tingling or pain in your face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of your body

Do not drive yourself if you have any of these symptoms.

### **Call your healthcare provider if you have new or worsening:**

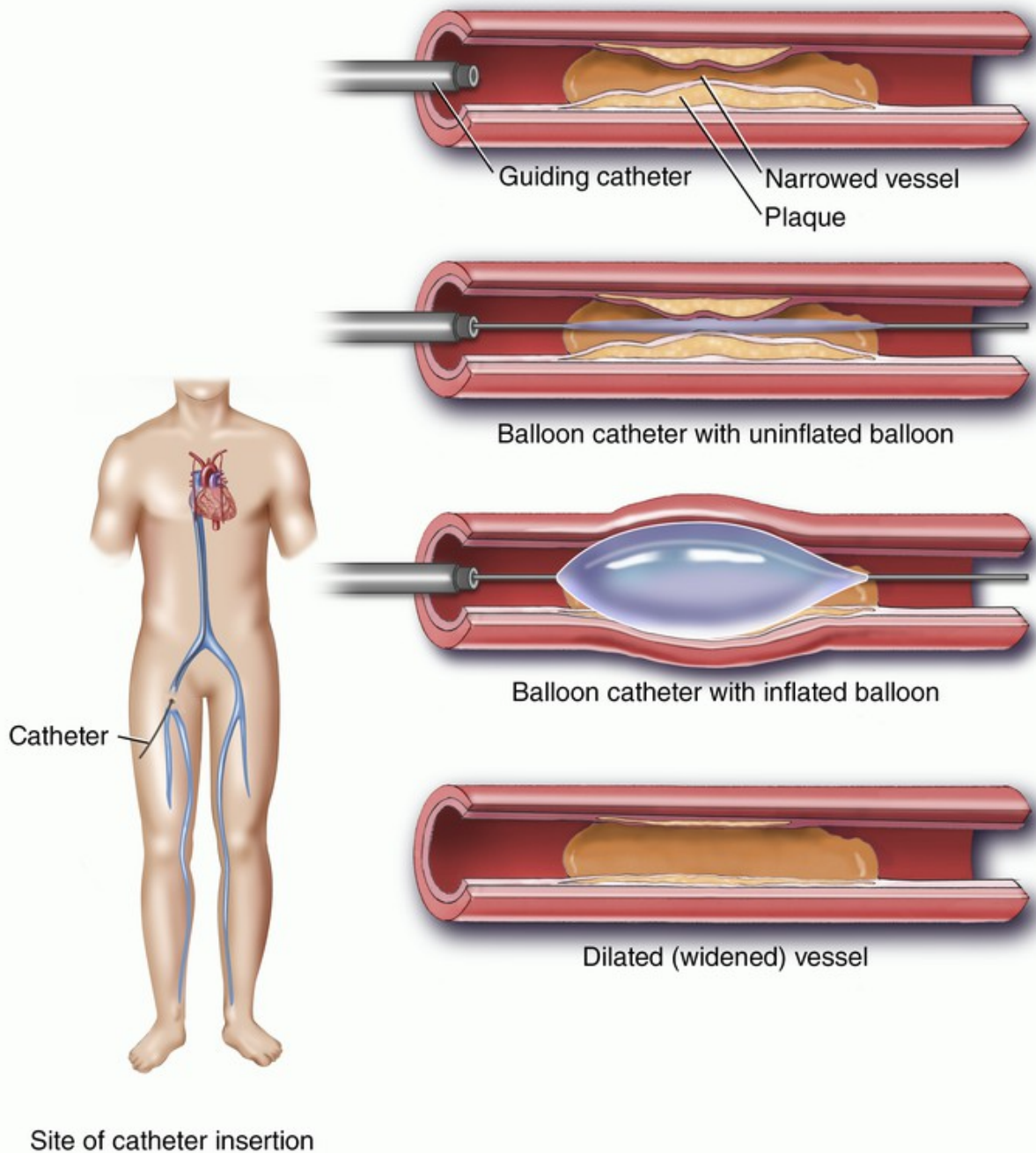
- Numbness in your feet or hands
- If you had surgery, signs of infection around your surgical wound. These include:
  - The area around your wound is more red or painful
  - Your wound area is very warm to touch
  - You have blood, pus, or other fluid coming from the wound area
  - You have a fever higher than 101.5° F (38.6° C)
  - You have chills or muscle aches

- Swelling, redness, or pain in your affected leg or arm
- Pain, redness, or swelling in your legs or arms
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Unusual or unexpected bleeding, including:
  - Black, tarry bowel movements or blood in your bowel movement
  - Blood in your urine or red or brown colored urine
  - Blood in your vomit or dark brown or black material in your vomit that looks like coffee grounds
  - Coughing up blood
  - New bruises with no known cause or severe bruising

Developed by RelayHealth.

*This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.*

# Blood Vessel Dilation with Balloon Catheter



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