

# Treating Peripheral Artery Disease with a Medicated Balloon or Stent

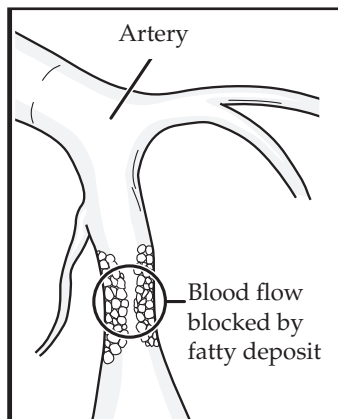
## Peripheral Artery Disease

You may have circulation problems that have to do with your blood vessels. You may feel aches, pains, cramps, numbness or muscle fatigue when you exercise.

These feelings may be caused by atherosclerosis, which interferes with blood flow to or from your blood vessels. This is also known as peripheral artery disease (PAD).

In PAD, cholesterol and plaque (fatty deposits) collect on the insides of the walls your blood vessels. This most often occurs in your legs. If the fatty build-up keeps collecting, your blood flow will be reduced.

When you exercise, your blood flow may not meet your body's need for extra oxygen. Without an adequate supply of oxygen, your muscles below this blockage may be starved of oxygen and you may have pain when walking or even at rest. You may need treatment to prevent this pain or even potential loss of your foot or part of your leg.



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**An artery blocked by plaque.**

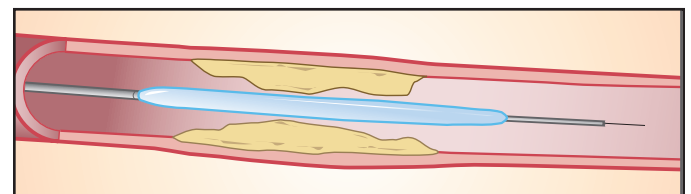
## How to Help Your PAD

You can slow down the progress of PAD by changing basic lifestyle habits, exercising and decreasing your risk factors.

- Do not use tobacco.
- Eat a diet low in cholesterol and saturated fat to reduce your risk of atherosclerosis.
- Join a walking program to improve the circulation to your legs and promote growth of new blood vessels.
- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Watch your blood pressure.
- If you have diabetes, work to keep your blood glucose in good control.
- Take good care of your feet.

## Balloon Angioplasty/Stent

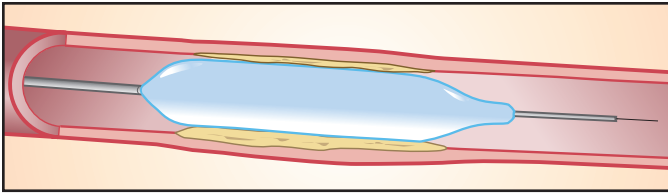
When changing your lifestyle is not enough to help your PAD, you may need to have a procedure that repairs short segments of a narrowed or blocked artery, using a small balloon on the end of a tube (catheter).



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**Angioplasty is used to break up plaque in an artery. A guidewire is inserted through the plaque.**

**(over)**

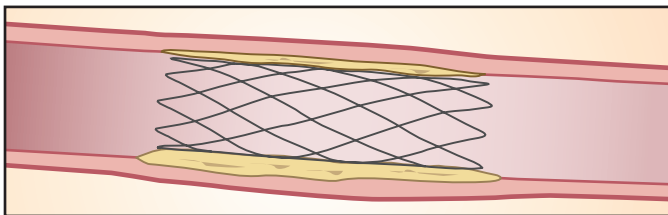


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**A balloon catheter on the end of the guidewire is inflated, breaking up the plaque.**

A stent (a small, mesh wire tube) is inserted to help keep the artery open.

The stent is placed on the end of a balloon catheter. When the balloon is inflated, the stent expands in the artery.



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**A stent is a mesh wire that helps keep your artery open. It is inserted with a balloon catheter.**

The balloon catheter is deflated and removed. The stent stays in place.

Your artery builds a coating of cells around the stent. It will feel like a normal artery wall.

## Medicated Balloon or Stent

Paclitaxel is a common medicine used to treat heart disease and many different types of cancer.

A very small amount of this medicine is put on the device (balloon or stent). This medicine is then transferred to your artery wall during the procedure.

There are benefits and risks of using a medicated device.

## Benefits

A medicated device can:

- limit the growth of scar tissue and a recurrence of blockages in the treated artery
- keep your artery open longer than using a non-medicated balloon or stent. This will help reduce how often you need to have the procedure again.

## Risks

Some studies have suggested an increase in the risk of death in people treated with a device coated with paclitaxel compared to people who were treated with an uncoated device.

A study by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which included 1,090 people, found that:

- about 20 in 100 people died after being treated with a medicated device
- about 13 in 100 people died after being treated with a non-medicated device.

These results caused the FDA to issue a warning about the use of paclitaxel-coated devices. However, the FDA did say that more research is needed and medicated devices still provide short-term benefits.

More recent studies from the Medicare Database Project and Optum Database Project, which included 150,000 people, found no increase in the risk of death in people being treated with a device coated with paclitaxel or an uncoated device.

Your health care provider will talk with you more about these studies and the benefits and risks of being treated with a medicated device.