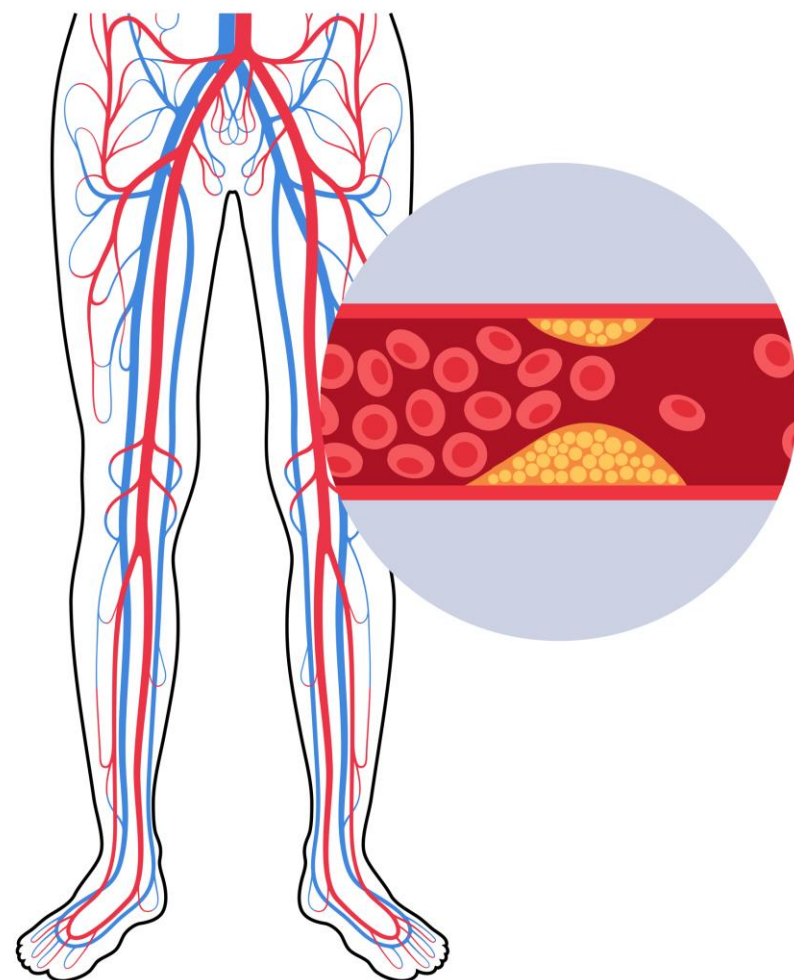




# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening Guide

For Community-Based Organizations





## **This Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening Guide is a resource for community-based organizations to help them:**

- ✓ Understand what PAD is and why early screening is important.
- ✓ Spread awareness and educate the community about PAD.
- ✓ Learn how to conduct a PAD screening event in the community.

## **In this guide, here's what you'll learn about PAD:**

- ✓ What it is
- ✓ What are its risks
- ✓ Who it impacts
- ✓ How it is diagnosed
- ✓ Why screening is important
- ✓ What is ankle-brachial index (ABI) and toe-brachial index (TBI)

## **Plus, you'll also find resources on how to conduct a local PAD screening, including:**

- ✓ Timelines, tasks and checklists
- ✓ Fundraising and marketing ideas
- ✓ Template letters
- ✓ Participant handouts
- ✓ Resources



# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): What is it?



Peripheral artery disease, or PAD, is a narrowing of the inside of the peripheral arteries that carry blood away from the heart to other parts of the body. Dangerous blockages can restrict circulation to limbs and organs.

The most common type is lower-extremity PAD, in which blood flow is reduced to the legs and feet. Its symptoms usually include cramping, fatigue, aching, pain or discomfort in the leg or hip muscles while walking or climbing stairs. This pain usually goes away within about 10 minutes of rest and returns while walking.

Upper-extremity PAD (arms, hands and fingers) is less common but affects about 10% of the population.



[View Interactive Webpage](#)

# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): What are the risks?

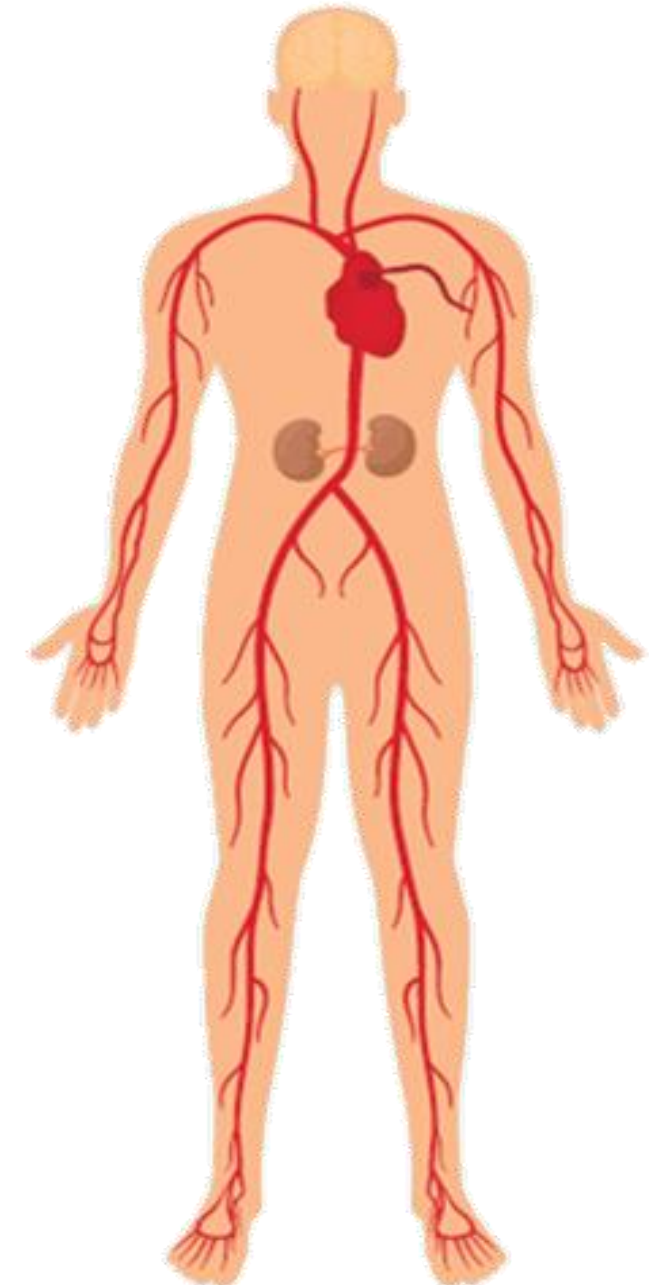


## **PAD can be a life-threatening condition.**

Without enough blood flow, organs, arms, legs and feet can suffer damage. Left untreated, the tissue can become infected or die, a condition called gangrene. Limb amputation is a serious complication of PAD.

PAD may be the first warning sign of atherosclerosis — the buildup of fatty plaque in the artery walls that narrows and blocks them throughout the body, including in the heart, brain, arms, legs, pelvis, kidneys and other organs. These fatty deposits also increase the risk for vascular inflammation and blood clots that can block the blood supply and lead to tissue damage or death.

Those who have PAD also have an increased risk of coronary artery disease, heart attack and stroke.





# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): Who does it impact?



PAD affects more than 10 million people in the U.S., the majority 65 years and older.

Like many other health conditions, inequities exist for those living with PAD — from delay in diagnosis to treatment outcomes — including:

**Geography:** The highest rates of lower limb amputation in the U.S. are in Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, Oklahoma and Washington, D.C.

**Race and ethnicity:** Rural, African American and American Indian populations are at highest risk for PAD. Black patients have a 2- to 4-fold higher risk of amputation compared with white patients.

## Social drivers of health:

- Poor access to health care
- Lower quality education and poor health literacy
- Low income and less access to quality housing
- Limited access to quality food
- Limited physical activity and exercise
- Impact of health on jobs and workplaces
- Inadequate health insurance
- Chronic stress

# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): Why Do Amputation Disparities Matter?

Due to a lack of awareness about PAD, many adults in the U.S. undergo unnecessary amputations of their toes, feet or legs.

Increasing communication and education with at-risk populations, health care professionals, policymakers and other key stakeholders can help raise overall awareness of PAD and its serious complications — including amputation.



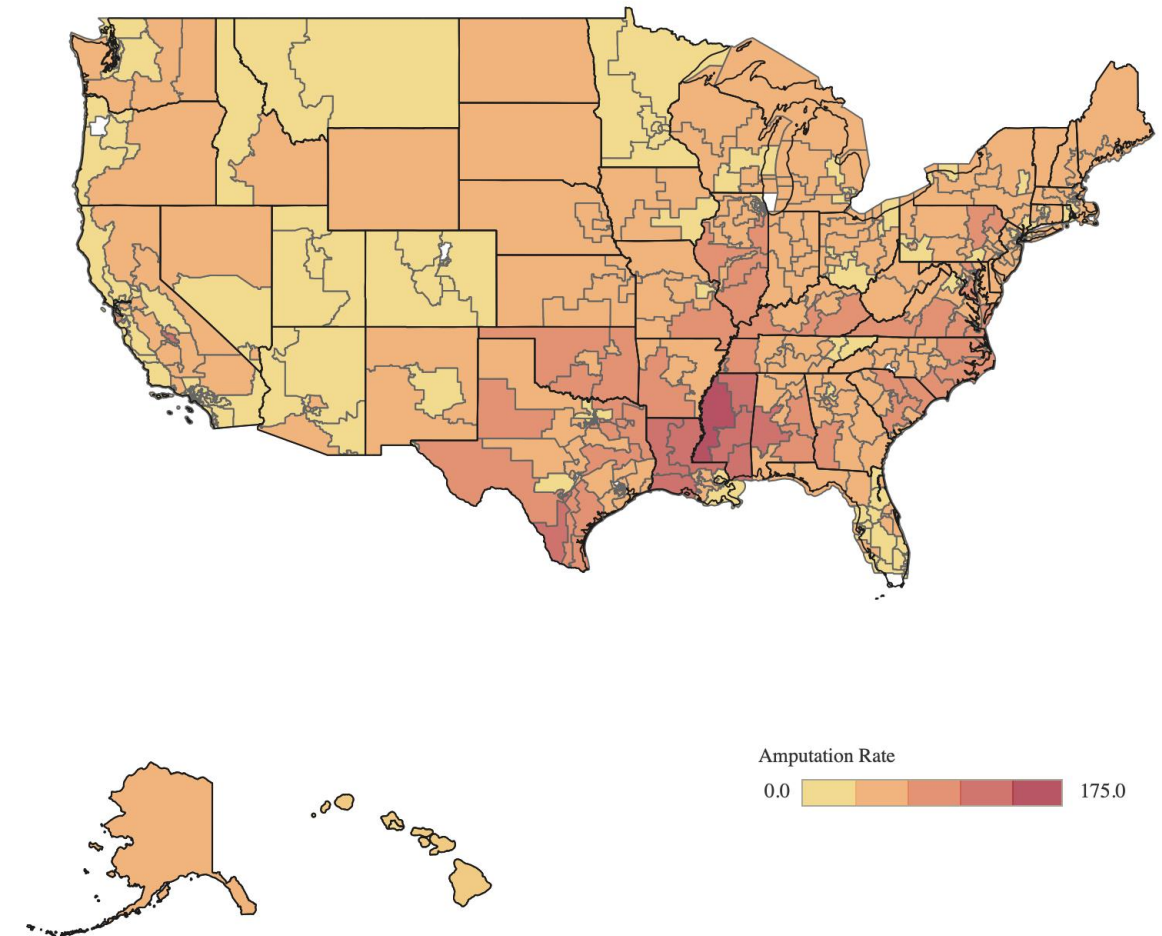
# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): Why do amputation disparities matter?



An interactive online heat map was developed to highlight the disparities that exist in at-risk communities related to PAD. Its goal? To bring awareness to non-traumatic lower limb amputation — a potential and serious complication for people living with PAD — and reduce amputations and other complications related to the disease.

## Use this heat map to:

- Learn more about lower limb amputations in your community.
- Advocate for awareness, increased communication and education surrounding amputation disparities.
- Improve health outcomes in the communities with the highest need.



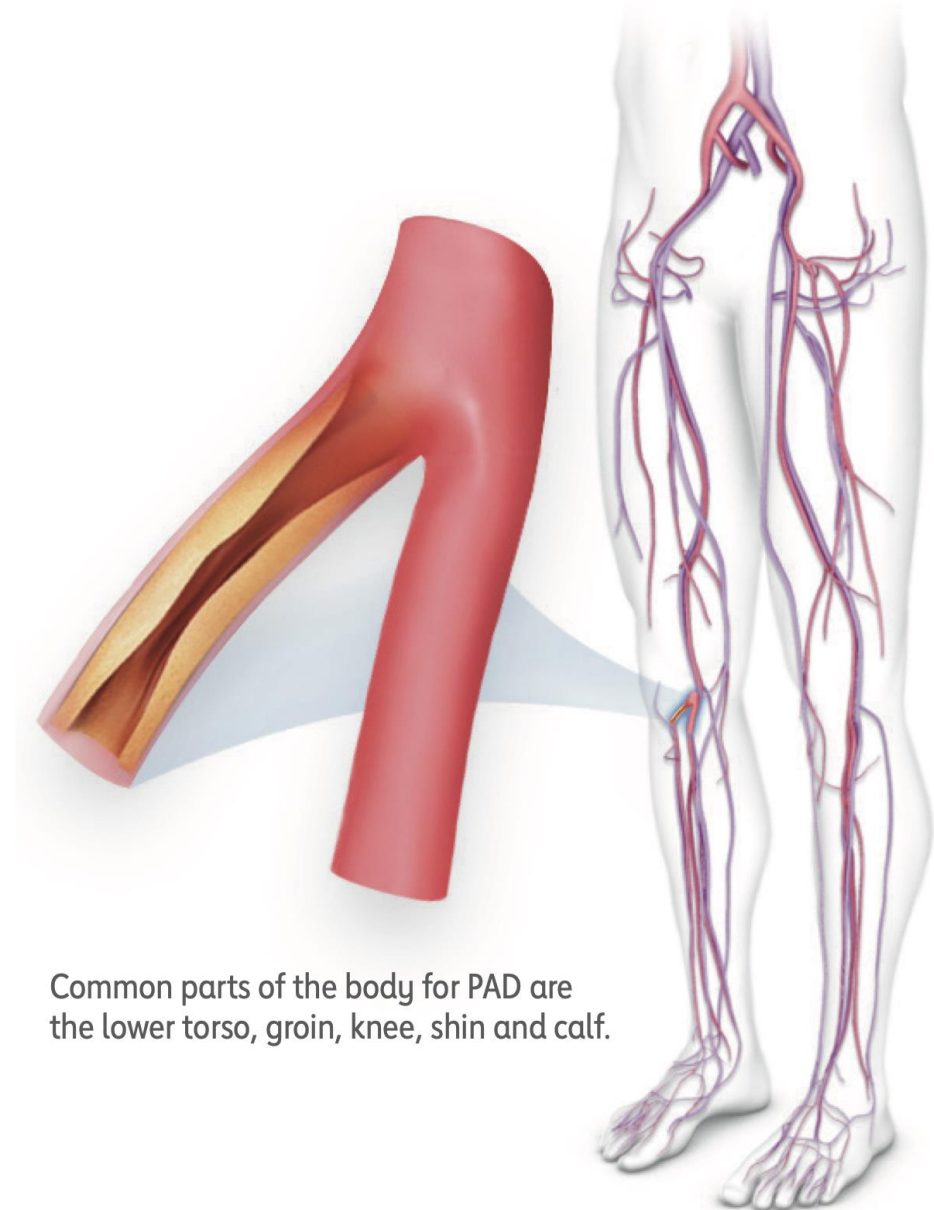


# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): How is it diagnosed?

The good news is PAD can be screened for and managed.

A health care professional can diagnose PAD in a patient after:

- Taking a medical history.
- Asking about symptoms.
- Checking pulses in the legs.
- Conducting a physical examination.



Common parts of the body for PAD are the lower torso, groin, knee, shin and calf.

# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): How is it diagnosed?



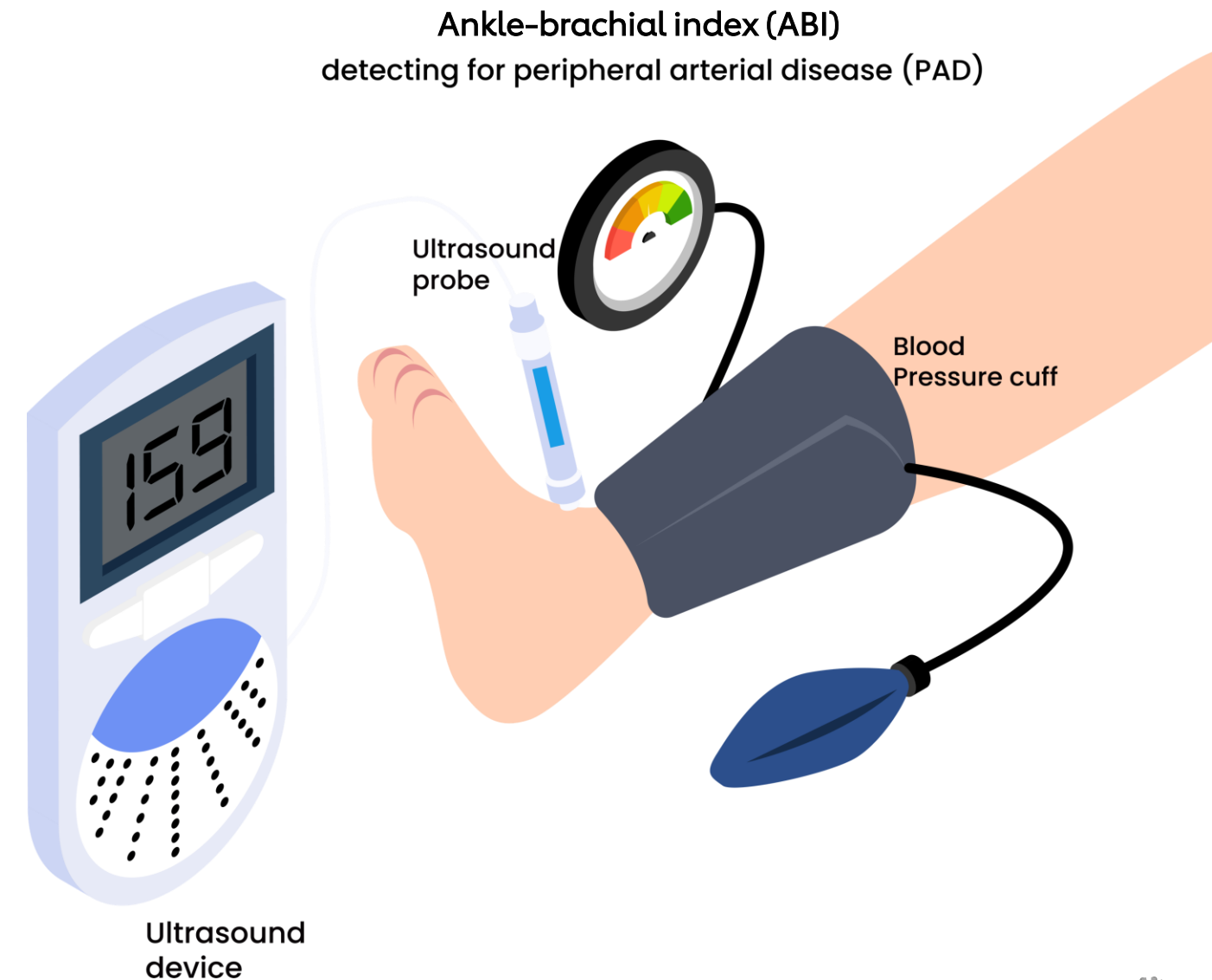
## The types of exams include:

- **Ankle-brachial index (ABI):** This painless, noninvasive test compares the blood pressure in your lower legs to the blood pressure in your arms.
- **Toe-brachial index (TBI):** This painless test is similar to the ABI but measures the systolic blood pressure in the great toe to that in the arm. It is useful in patients with calcified, noncompressible leg arteries, such as those with diabetes or chronic kidney disease.
- **Duplex ultrasonography:** The noninvasive test visualizes the arteries and veins with sound waves and measures blood flow to indicate the presence of a blockage.
- **Computed tomographic (CT) angiography:** The noninvasive test uses X-ray and contrast agent (dye) to create pictures of blood vessels, such as arteries, in your body, such as the abdomen, pelvis and legs. This test may be suitable in some people with pacemakers or stents.
- **Magnetic resonance angiography (MRA):** The test provides cross-sectional images like a CT without using X-rays. Patients with a pacemaker or other cardiac implantable electronic device should check with their health care professional before imaging.
- **Angiography:** During a peripheral angiogram, also called an arteriogram, a contrast dye is injected into the artery and X-rays are taken to show blood flow in the leg arteries to locate any blockages.

# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): What is ankle-brachial index (ABI)?

An ankle-brachial index, or ABI, is a simple, quick test that helps health care professionals compare a patient's blood pressure in their ankle with blood pressure in their arm to determine if there's a difference. An ABI can be done alone or combined with additional tests, such as ankle pulse volume recordings (PVR) or Doppler waveforms. Both tests can provide more details about the blood flow in the legs.

If a patient has symptoms, signs or risk factors that suggest they might have PAD, the [2024 American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Joint Committee on Clinical Practice Guidelines](#) recommends that health care professionals use the resting ABI to confirm the diagnosis. The guidelines state that in patients at increased risk of PAD—such as those with diabetes, a history of smoking or older age—screening with the resting ABI is reasonable.



# Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD): What is toe-brachial index (TBI)?



A toe-brachial index, or TBI, is similar to an ankle-brachial index, or ABI, but it measures the blood flow in the toes instead of the ankles. For patients with stiff arteries, a TBI test can provide more reliable information than an ABI.

If a patient's ABI shows a result greater than 1.40, this indicates their arteries are noncompressible, meaning the arteries are stiff and cannot be properly squeezed during the test. If this is the case and the patient has symptoms, signs or risk factors that suggest they might have PAD, the [2024 American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Joint Committee on Clinical Practice Guidelines](#) recommends health care professionals use TBI for a more accurate diagnosis.

# **Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Logistics and Operations**



# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Suggested Tasks and Timeline

Conducting a community PAD screening event may allow for earlier diagnosis of PAD and educate at-risk communities about the signs and symptoms of PAD. To help get you started, we have provided a suggested and recommended timeline for preparation before the event. Use this checklist as a guide and modify it as needed for your specific necessities.





# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Suggested Tasks and Timeline

## 6 Months Before Event

- ✓ Secure the location for the screening.
- ✓ Determine the date of the event. (Be aware of what other community events may be happening on that date. Consider if they may be in conflict with your event or tie into it, such as a blood drive.)
- ✓ Determine the start and end time of the event. (Plan for 10 to 20 minutes per test. This will depend on the equipment used and level of expertise/experience using the equipment.)
- ✓ Think about the size of the location for the event and how you will divide the space into four areas: check-in, waiting, screening, and results (private). Consider how many staff and health care professionals you need to recruit.
- ✓ Make a chart of what equipment and supplies you need and what will be donated, rented or purchased.
- ✓ Create a budget for the event. If renting or purchasing, estimate the costs (optional and if necessary).
- ✓ Create a website or page and/or QR code for registration to the event.
- ✓ Send out emails/letters and/or make calls requesting the participation of local health care professionals.  
[Template linked here.](#)
- ✓ Recruit volunteers to help with the event.
- ✓ Create a marketing plan.
- ✓ Start fundraising requests (optional and if necessary).

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Location



Consider these types of sites for a screening event.

Be sure the location has enough space for each of these stations: check-in, waiting, screening and results.

- YMCAs
- Churches or places of worship
- Hotels
- Barbershops
- Libraries
- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- Senior centers
- Community centers
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)
- HOA clubhouse or gathering spots
- Schools

When searching for a location, look for a space that can provide:

- Room for at least four areas (check-in, waiting, screening and results)
- Access to power
- Access to Wi-Fi (optional)
- A quiet area to listen to the Doppler
- A private area to discuss participant results and referrals



# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Suggested Tasks and Timeline

## 4-6 Months Before Event

- ✓ Organize the needed supplies and determine the need to rent or buy additional items. (See slides 24-26.)

## 2-3 Months Before Event

- ✓ Begin executing the marketing plan. (See slide 23)

## Day Before Event

- ✓ Set up the location site into four areas: check-in, waiting, screening and results (be sure the results area is in a private section).
- ✓ ***Check that all equipment is functioning properly.\****

*\*The tasks in italic bold are to be conducted by a qualified health care professional.*

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Suggested Tasks and Timeline

In collaboration with your health care professional, this is the suggested timeline for the day of the event.

## Day of Event

### Check-in Area

- ✓ Check in participant.
- ✓ Ask participant to complete the required paperwork. ***This paperwork may include a symptom checklist, consent form and other forms requested by the health care professional conducting the screening.\****
- ✓ Provide participant with a check-in number (optional).
- ✓ Direct participant to the waiting area.

### Waiting Area

- ✓ Ask participant to wait to be called in the Waiting Area.
- ✓ Provide bottled water and/or individually packed heart-healthy snacks (optional).

***\*The tasks/supplies in italic bold are to be conducted/provided by a qualified health care professional.***

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Suggested Tasks and Timeline

## Screening Area

- ✓ Ask participant to remove their shoes and socks.
- ✓ *Review participant forms.\**
- ✓ *Perform the ABI/TBI test.\**
- ✓ Direct participant to the Results Area.
- ✓ *Interpret screening results.\**

## Results Area

- ✓ *Discuss screening results with participant and explain what they mean.\**
- ✓ *Provide participant with information on nearby health care professionals and hospitals as needed.\**
- ✓ Offer educational handouts to the participant.

## After Event

- ✓ Clean up.
- ✓ Send thank-you letters to the health care professionals and volunteers who participated in the event.

*\*The tasks/supplies in italic bold are to be conducted/provided by a qualified health care professional.*

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Collaborating with Health Care Professionals



It is critical that a health care professional who can perform ABI/TBI screenings and interpret the results is present at the screening events.

Qualified health care professionals can be found at:

- Clinics (including diabetes, health, urgent care, volunteer and walk-in)
- Community health centers
- Hospitals
- Local health department offices
- Primary care offices
- Podiatry offices
- Wound care centers

After the names and contact information of qualified health care professionals have been identified, [use this template](#) as a guide in communicating with health care professionals to ask them to participate in the ABI/TBI screening event. It is recommended to have a face-to-face meeting or phone call conversation with the health care professional when possible.





# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Working With Others



In addition to working with health care professionals, look for volunteers in the community who can help at PAD screenings. (See slides 18-19 for a list of tasks.)

First, estimate how many people you will need to staff the event. Depending on the size of the event space, the amount of equipment and how many health care professionals attending, on average, you will need 6-10 others to help facilitate the event.

To find volunteers, consider reaching out to high school or college students interested in the medical field or medical students. Also, contact local businesses or commercial sponsors who support PAD testing, such as ABI/TBI equipment vendors, and/or have an interest in the health of their community, such as local pharmacies.

Another opportunity for collaboration is to reach out to your local Medicaid office to have a representative onsite to check participants' coverage and help them sign up if available.



# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Fundraising (optional)



There may or may not be costs associated with hosting a community PAD screening. To determine if you need funding, review the equipment and supply lists (slides 24-26). What can you get donated? What can be borrowed?

If you cannot rely on donations or borrowed equipment, you may need to raise funds to buy supplies, such as disinfectant wipes or bottled water, or rent equipment, such as tables and chairs.

## Here are some suggestions on how to fundraise:

- Make an estimate of what you need to rent or buy for the event and their associated costs.
- Based on the estimate, set a fundraising goal.
- Start fundraising plans as far in advance of the event as possible.
- Write a fundraising letter and mail or email it to potential donors.
- Conduct an online search for grant or community funding. To get started, use search terms such as "community funding," "community health," "community grants" and "community resources."
- Check with local foundations for funding.

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Marketing



After the event details are secured, the health care professionals and community volunteers are lined up, and your fundraising goals are met (optional and if necessary), the next step is to market the event. There's no sense in doing all the work needed to create the event if no one knows about it.

Promoting the event is key for the success of the event. Here are some suggestions on how to go about it and see slides 28-30 for templates:

## Social media

- Share provided content across your social media platforms:
  - Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, Snapchat and WhatsApp
- Encourage reposts and retweets.
- Ask friends and neighbors to promote the event across their channels.
- [Template social media post](#)

## Flyers

- Post at local grocery stores, businesses, churches, community centers and other high-traffic areas in the community.
- Provide a QR code or other means to sign up ahead of the event to encourage people to preregister for the event.
- [Template flyer](#)

## Public service announcements and ads

- Reach out to local news, radio and newspapers.

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Equipment



Use this checklist as a guide for the equipment you may need for a safe, effective and well-organized event:

## Check-In Area

- ☐ Chairs
- ☐ Tables

## Waiting Area

- ☐ Chairs
- ☐ Tables (for refreshments)

## Screening Area

- ☐ ***PAD screening equipment\****
- ☐ Participant-safe examination tables, such as folding massage tables or stretchers
- ☐ Privacy screens
- ☐ Step stools (preferably with handles) to help participants onto examination tables

## Results Area

- ☐ Chairs
- ☐ Tables (for printouts of participant resource materials)

*\*The equipment in italic bold are to be provided by a qualified health care professional.*

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Supplies



Use this checklist as a guide for supplies you may need for a safe, effective and well-organized event. We recommend you share this list with the health care professionals attending the event to determine what items they may be able to provide.

## Check-In Area

- ☐ Clipboards
- ☐ ***Participant forms***  
*(including consent/waiver forms)\**
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ "Check In" sign(s)

## Waiting Area

- ☐ Bottled waters and heart-healthy  
individually packaged snacks  
(optional)
- ☐ Trash bins and trash bags
- ☐ "Waiting Area" sign(s)

*\*The supplies in italic bold are to be provided by a qualified health care professional.*

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Supplies



## Screening Area

- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Disposable examination pillowcases
- ☐ Infection control supplies, including hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes and disposable latex-free medical gloves
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Power cords/power strips
- ☐ Trash bins and trash bags
- ☐ Rolls or sheets of disposable examination table paper
- ☐ "Testing Area" sign(s)

## Results Area

- ☐ Clipboards
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Printouts of participant resource materials  
(see slides 31–36)
- ☐ ***Printouts of referrals\****
- ☐ "Results Area" sign(s)

*\*The supplies in italic bold are to be provided by a qualified health care professional.*



# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Healthcare Professional Follow-Up Letter and Checklist



Email or mail this to the health care professionals who will be attending your event. [Template Letter](#)

Dear [fill in name of health care professional],

We are looking forward to working with you at our PAD screening event on [fill in date] from [fill in start and end times] at [fill in location/address]. *Please arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the event to set up and test your equipment.*

**You (and your team if applicable) will be responsible for:**

- ✓ Providing and setting up the ABI and TBI testing equipment.
- ✓ Conducting the testing and talking to participants about their results.
- ✓ Offering participant counseling as needed (*optional*).

- ✓ Bringing [fill in amount needed] copies of participant forms: medical history, consent/waiver forms, results.
- ✓ Bringing [fill in amount needed] copies of referral information of PAD specialists in the area.

**Our team will be providing:**

- Clipboards
- Pens
- Trash bins and trash bags
- Baby wipes
- Disposable examination pillowcases
- Infection control supplies, including hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes and disposable latex-free medical gloves
- Paper towels
- Power cords/power strips
- Rolls or sheets of disposable examination table paper
- Printouts of participant handouts

If there is anything else you or your team needs, please contact [fill in name, phone and email] no later than [fill in date].

Thank you again for being part of our PAD screening event. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,  
[fill in name]

# **Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Marketing and Social Media Templates**



# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Social Media Template



Place  
logo  
here

## Get screened for Peripheral Artery Disease

*One or more of the following  
put you at risk for PAD:*

- A family history of PAD
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Smoking

Peripheral artery disease, or PAD, is painful or uncomfortable muscle cramping in the hips, thighs or calves when walking, climbing stairs or exercising. Early diagnosis and treatment can prevent serious consequences, including amputation, heart attack or stroke. Join us for [name of event], [time, date, address], to learn more about your risk for PAD. RSVP at [link].

Template social media post

[heart.org/PAD](https://heart.org/PAD)

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Flyer Template



**Every Step Matters:  
Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)  
Awareness and Screening**



**[enter date]**

**[enter time]**

**[enter  
location/address]**

**Did you know one or more of the  
following make you at risk for PAD?**

If you have one or more of the following,  
you may benefit from this screening:

- Age 65 or older
- History of smoking
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Family history of PAD

**RSVP**

**[Insert RSVP Link or QR Code]**

**[Insert Email Address]**

**[Insert Phone Number]**

**[Insert Organization Logo]**

[Click here to download  
the editable flyer](#)

# **Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Participant Handouts and Resources**



# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Participant Handout



You have been diagnosed with peripheral artery disease (PAD). Now what?

Here are the answers to some frequently asked questions:

## Who cares for patients with PAD?

Patients with PAD can be cared for by several health care professionals, including:

- **Primary care doctors:** Discuss your diagnosis with your primary care physician who can help coordinate your care with different specialists and can help adjust your medications.
- **Vascular specialists:** In addition to your primary care doctor, you may see a specialist in cardiology, vascular surgery, vascular medicine or interventional radiology. These specialists also can provide or coordinate medical treatments to help with symptoms and reduce the risk for heart, brain and leg events.
- **Other specialists:** These health care professionals may be involved in your care if needed, including a podiatrist (preventative care/keeping you active), an endocrinologist (diabetes management), a physical therapist (help improve walking) and a nutritionist (dietary changes).



# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Participant Handout



## How do I find a PAD specialist?

Ask your primary care doctor, search online or contact the specialists on the referral sheet provided.

## What should I ask the doctor?

- How did I get PAD?
- Is my family at risk for PAD?
- What are typical symptoms for PAD?
- Does this mean I'm at risk for an amputation?
- How can I improve my walking and function?
- Are there medications that I can take to reduce my risk?
- What habits or activities can make my PAD get worse? Better?
- What diet or lifestyle modifications can I make to improve my outcome and prevent the disease from progressing?

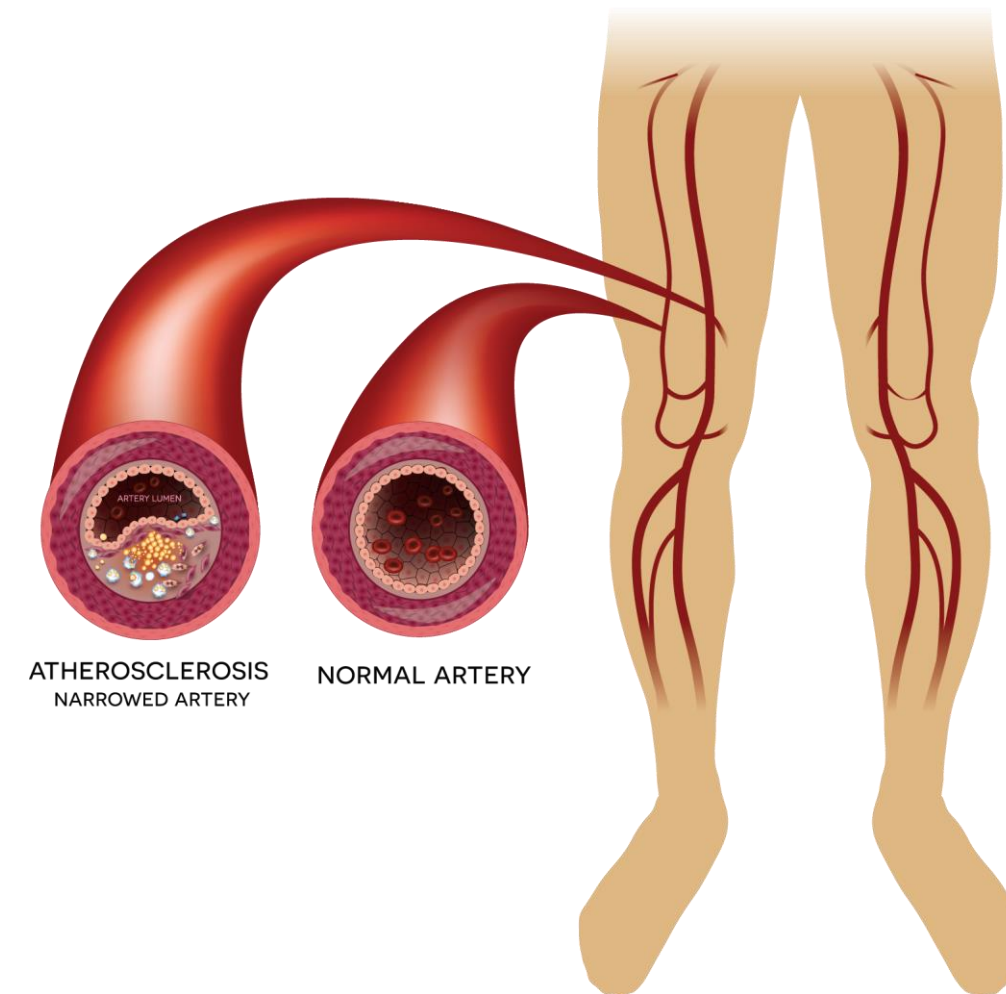
For a list of more questions view the [Discussion Guide](#) and pick up the printout at the Results Area.

# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Participant Handout



## What can I do to reduce my risk to my heart, brain and legs?

People with PAD have higher rates of having other cardiovascular events, such as heart disease, stroke, blood clots and deep vein thrombosis. Smoking, diabetes and kidney disease are the strongest risk factors for the progression of PAD and contribute significantly to the risk of amputation. Other risk factors include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, overweight and obesity, and inactivity. Talk to your doctor about how to reduce your risk.



# Community-Based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Patient Resources



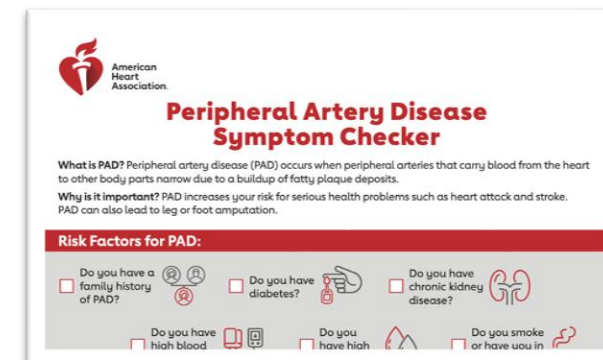
[What Is Peripheral Artery Disease?](#)

[¿Qué es la enfermedad arterial periférica \(PAD\)?](#)



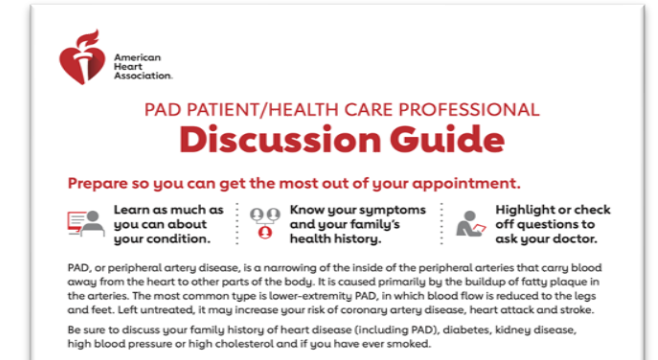
[Are you at risk for PAD?](#)

[¿Tienes riesgo de padecer PAD?](#)



[PAD Symptom Checker](#)

[Verificador de síntomas de la enfermedad arterial periférica](#)



[PAD Discussion Guide](#)

[Guía de Discusión](#)

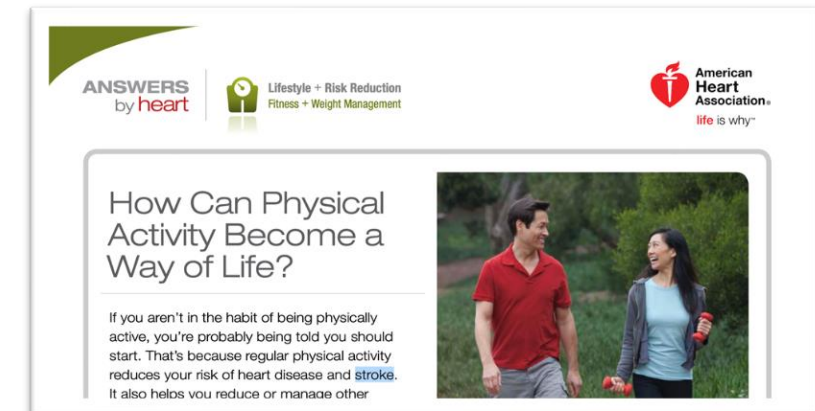
# Community-based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Participant and Patient Resources



[Are you at risk for Peripheral Artery Disease? \(video\)](#)



[Are you at risk for PAD? \(heart.org\)](#)



[How Can Physical Activity Become a Way of Life](#)



[How Can I Quit Smoking?](#)



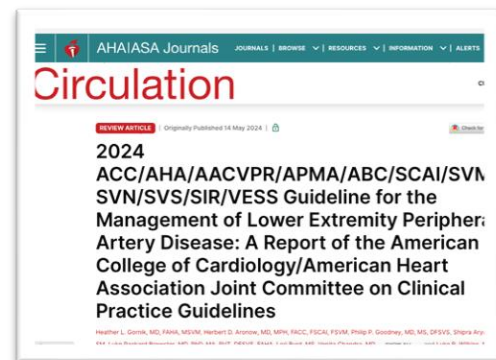
[What Is Diabetes and How Can I Manage It?](#)



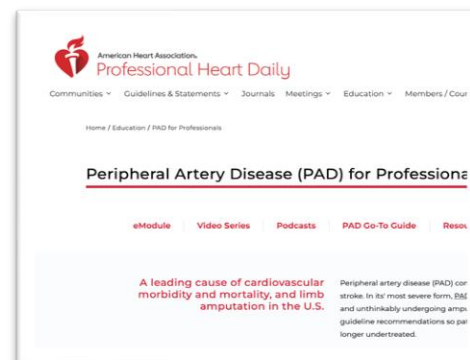
[How Do I Follow a Healthy Diet Pattern?](#)



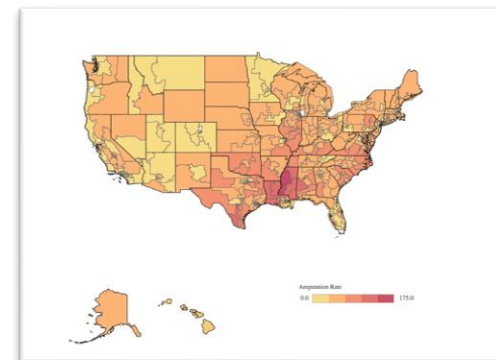
# Community-based Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Screening: Health Care Professional Resources



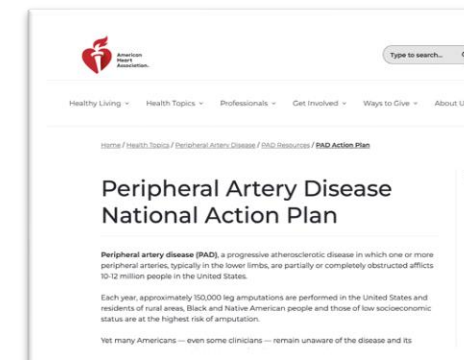
[2024 American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Joint Committee on Clinical Practice Guidelines](#)



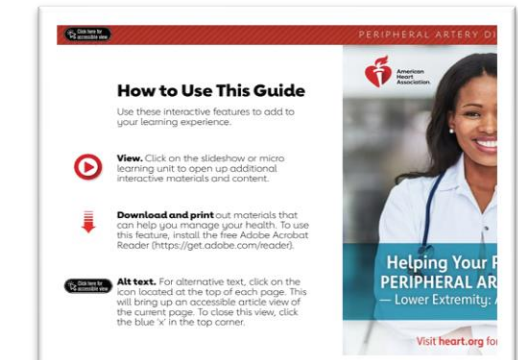
[Peripheral Artery Disease \(PAD\) for Professionals - Professional Heart Daily | American Heart Association](#)



[Heat Map - Professional Heart Daily | American Heart Association](#)



[PAD National Action Plan](#)



[Clinician Go-To Guide](#)