



ASK THE SOCIAL WORKER: PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE

Question: My father just found out he has Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD). What is PAD? He worries that I might also have it because I was a smoker and I am fifty-two years old. Should I be worried that I might have PAD?

Answer: I am sorry to hear your father has Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD). It is fortunate that his condition has been diagnosed, so he can seek treatment and manage his condition. Today, many Americans are discovering they have PAD, thanks to a national PAD awareness campaign. The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, a sponsor of the campaign, points out that PAD awareness is very important because one in every 20 Americans over the age of 50 has PAD.

PAD develops when plaque (extra cholesterol and other fats) builds up in the walls of the arteries that carry blood from the heart to the legs, arms, head, kidneys and stomach. Just like narrowed arteries in the heart, narrowed arteries in the legs increase a person's risk for having a heart attack or stroke. PAD may also limit a person's mobility and in some cases lead to amputation.

Most people with PAD do not experience symptoms, but those who do report some of the following signs:

- Pain, fatigue, heaviness, tiredness or cramping in the legs that occurs during activity
- Pain in the legs and/or feet that disturbs sleep
- A lower temperature in one leg

- Sores or wounds on toes, feet or legs that heal slowly, poorly or not at all
- Paleness or blueness in the color of feet
- Poor nail and hair growth

Your father is wise to be concerned about your risk for PAD. You may have two of the following risk factors associated with PAD:

- 50 years of age or older
- Smoker or former smoker
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- History of vascular disease, heart attack or stroke
- African American

I suggest you see your doctor and discuss your risks for developing PAD. Be sure to let the doctor know of your father's recent diagnosis. Also, learn more about PAD by visiting www.aboutpad.org or www.PADCoalition.org.

Sources: National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute Diseases and Conditions Index: Peripheral Disease; www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

It's been real cold. Yesterday I looked in my closet, and my coat was wearing a sweater.

Jolly Jokes for Older Folks – Age-Enhanced by Bob Phillips

Laughter is known to boost the immune system, lower blood pressure, burn calories and release pleasure-inducing chemicals in the brain.

CONTRIBUTORS

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CORKING YOUR LEAKY FINANCES



Personal finance expert Galia Gichon recommends plugging up some of those budget leaks you might be experiencing. As a matter of fact, she says that if you can figure out how to save just \$125 per month and then set up an automatic savings to a mutual

fund that yields an average of 7 percent, in five years you will have almost \$9,000. In 20 years, that amount will have grown to \$65,000!

Here are four suggestions from Gichon (www.downtoearthfinance.com) for coming up with that \$125 per month:

1. **Do you really need all those channels?** Take a look at your cable bill. You can roll your bill back by getting rid of premium channels or subscribing to a smaller, cheaper package.
2. **Stop picking up magazines from the supermarket or newsstand.** Save yourself some money by subscribing to your favorite magazine instead. If you're subscribing to anything you don't read, cancel it.
3. **Consider changing your cell service to get a better deal.** Shopping around can save you bucks (just make sure you won't be penalized for breaking a contract early).
4. **Call your credit card company and ask for a lower rate.** Believe it or not, this usually works.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE MPPAF'S NATIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY

www.debtadvice.org or (800) 388-2227

This Web site is a service provided by members of the National Foundation of Credit Counseling, the nations largest and longest serving national nonprofit credit counseling network. It helps consumers understand the wise use of credit and locate a trained certified counselor.

www.annualcreditreport.com

This Web site was created by Experion, Equifax and Transunion. It provides a secure means for consumers to obtain a free copy of their credit report annually in accordance with the Fair and Accurate Transactions Act.

Federal Trade Commission: www.ftc.gov or (202) 326-2222

The FTC deals with issues that touch the economic lives of most Americans. Their purpose is to protect against unfair methods of competition in commerce. It has a special section, *Identity Theft*, where consumers can learn about the crime of identity theft and how to defend against it.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“ Nothing breaks up homes, country and nations like somebody publishing their memoirs. ”

— Will Rogers

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Call Karen Wiener, Manager of Social Services at (888) 994-3863, ext. 2390, or write to karen@wrmail.org.