

Peripheral Vascular Bypass Surgery

You are about to have the blockages in your peripheral arteries repaired.

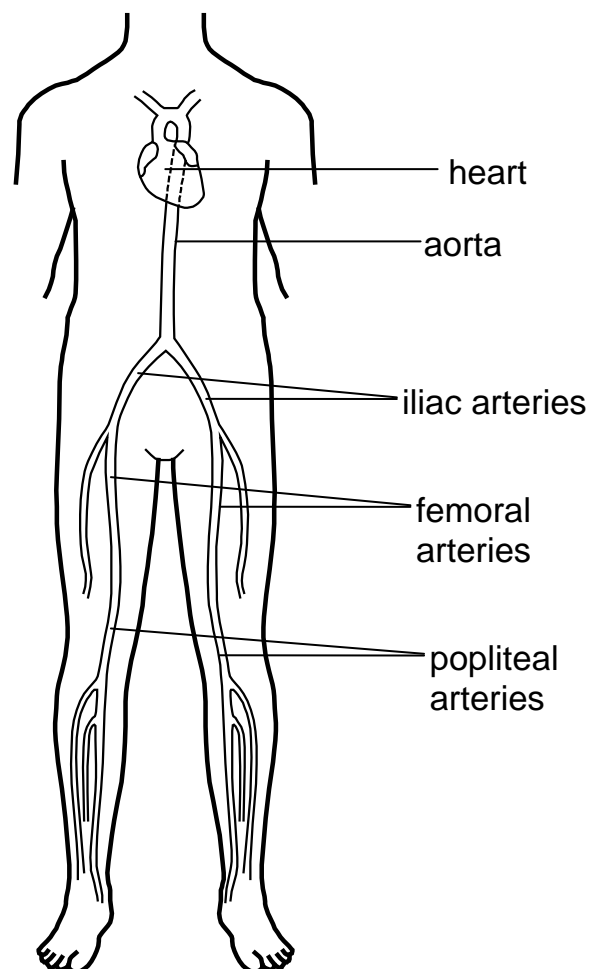
This handout gives you information about your surgery, what to expect from surgery, how to prepare for it and what to expect after surgery.

What are the peripheral arteries?

The aorta is the main blood vessel that carries blood from your heart to the rest of your body. The arteries that carry blood from your aorta to other parts of your body are called the peripheral arteries or the peripheral circulation.

Your peripheral circulation includes these arteries:

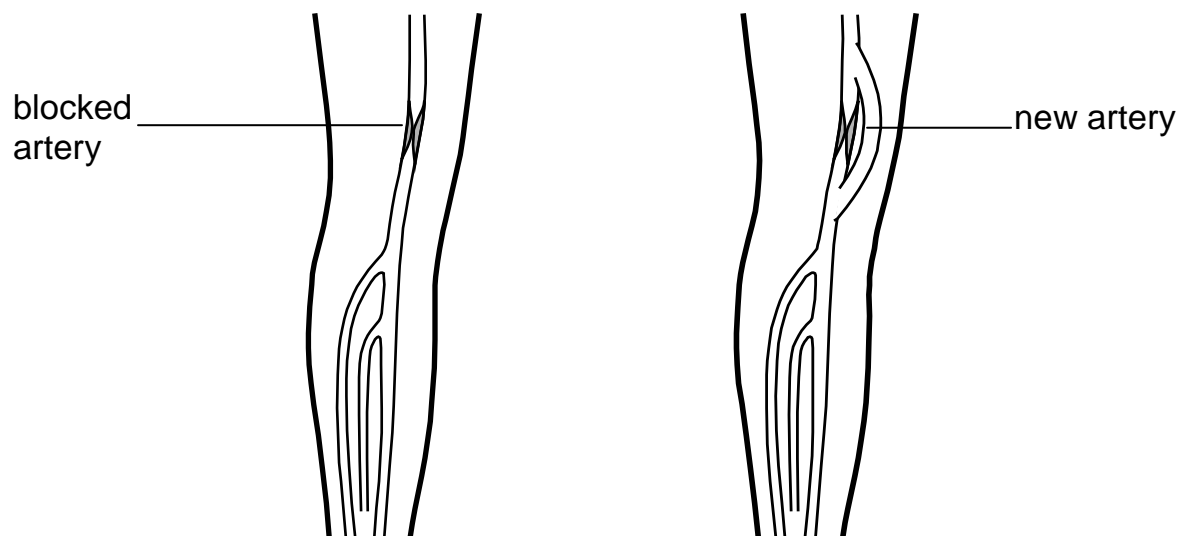
- iliac arteries
- femoral arteries
- popliteal arteries



What is peripheral bypass surgery?

During peripheral bypass surgery, the blocked artery is left in place and a new artery is placed to detour blood around the blockage. This allows the blood to flow around the blockage and reach the rest of the leg.

Larger arteries are usually bypassed with man-made grafts. Smaller arteries are usually bypassed using veins from your own leg.



How is peripheral bypass surgery done?

The surgery is done through incisions in your groin and along the length of your leg. The surgeon attaches the graft at the top and bottom end. The area that is blocked will no longer receive any blood flow.

At the end of the procedure, your incision will be closed with surgical clips.

Before your surgery

You will attend the Pre-Op Clinic at the West End Clinic (same building as the Main Street West Urgent Care Centre), 690 Main Street West, Hamilton, before your surgery.

At this visit you will:

- See a nurse who will take your health history and go over your medications with you. **Please bring all medications in their original containers with you to this appointment.**
- Receive information about what time to come to the Hamilton General Hospital and what medications to take at home before you come in.
- You will need to buy 2 packages of chlorhexidine scrub sponges.
 - One package for the **night before** your surgery.
 - One package for the **morning of** your surgery.
- You can buy the sponges at the Hamilton General Hospital Pharmacy and the Main Street West Urgent Care Centre (690 Main Street West, Hamilton).

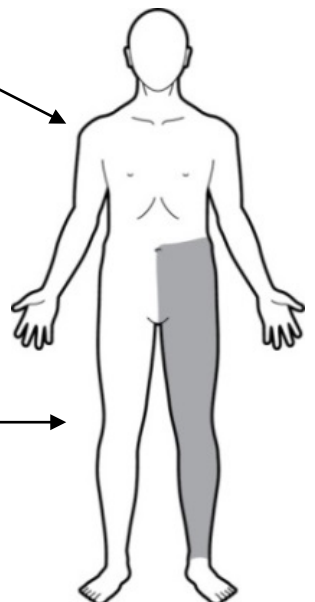


- Never use the sponge near your eyes.
- Once you have completed the scrub, rinse the soap solution off your body completely.
- Pat yourself dry with a clean freshly washed towel. **DO NOT** apply any powders, deodorants or lotions.
- Dress with freshly washed clothes.



The night before your surgery

- Wash and rinse your hair using your normal shampoo. Make sure you completely rinse the shampoo from your hair and body.
- Wash your body with regular soap. Make sure you completely rinse off the soap from your body.
- Now begin using one of the scrub sponges that you purchased.
- Wash the shaded area as shown on the diagram. Avoid scrubbing your skin too hard.



The morning of your surgery

- Wash your body again with regular soap, as you did the night before.
- Using the 2nd scrub brush, wash the shaded area of your body again, as you did the night before.

The day of your surgery

- Remove contact lenses, nail polish, earrings and all other jewellery.

All types of body jewellery need to be removed:

- all rings – including wedding rings
 - toe rings
 - earrings
 - chains
 - necklaces
 - barbells
 - watches
 - bracelets
 - bangles
 - labrets
 - captive bead rings
 - religious medals
- Please bring a housecoat and full back, non-slip slippers with you to the hospital. Your family can bring anything else you may need after your surgery.

When you get to the hospital, go to Patient Registration. From there you will be taken to Same Day Surgery.

In Same Day Surgery you will be asked to change into a hospital gown. An intravenous (IV) line will be started in your arm. The IV is used to give you fluids and medications.

You will meet the anesthesiologist who is assisting with the surgery. From there you will be taken into the operating room.

Where can my family wait?

Your family can wait in one of the waiting rooms outside the Operating Room on the 3rd floor.

During your surgery

In the Operating Room you will meet the nurses who will be providing care during the surgery. They will position you on the operating table. Your skin will be cleaned with a special solution and you will be covered with special drapes and blankets. Tell the nurses if you are uncomfortable.

If you are having an epidural it will be put in at this time.

During surgery you will be asleep. A tube will be placed through your nostril and down into your stomach to drain fluids during the surgery and for a period of time after you wake up.

Often after this surgery your intestinal tract takes time to start working normally again. The tube will remain in your nose until your intestinal tract begins to work normally again.

After your surgery

After surgery you will be taken to the Post-Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU) or Recovery Room for a couple of hours. From there you will be taken to 4 West.

The nurses will take your blood pressure and check your incision sites a number of times throughout the night. They will also check the circulation in your feet to make sure that the graft has remained open.

The next day you will be given a regular diet. The physiotherapist will help you begin walking around the unit. You may also have blood tests taken. Your intravenous line will be removed once you are eating and drinking well. Most people go home on the 2nd or 3rd day after surgery.

When you are at home ...



When you get home:

- go for a walk each day.
- plan for several rest periods during the day.
- increase activity daily.
- avoid caffeine and other stimulants before to bedtime as they may affect your sleep.
- do not lift or push anything over 4.5 kilograms or 10 pounds for the next 4 to 6 weeks – this includes children, pets, groceries, laundry and weights.
- you can shower but do not soak in the tub until after your surgical clips have been removed.
- some leg swelling is normal after surgery. When you are sitting try and keep your feet elevated. Also, do not cross your legs when sitting.

If your surgeon has used man-made material for your grafts it is important that you tell other doctors and dentists that you have man-made material inside. You will need to take antibiotic medications before any invasive procedure to help prevent your graft from becoming infected.

What are the signs of an infection?



Signs of infection are:

- redness or heat along the incision
- green, yellow or white drainage from your incision
- opening of your incision
- fever of 38.5°C or 100°F and chills with any type of drainage from your incision



If you have any signs of infection, call your family doctor or go to an Urgent Care Centre right away.

If you have severe pain in your leg that is not well controlled, or bleeding at the surgical site, go to the Emergency Department right away.

Pain control medication

You will be given a prescription for pain control medication. Sometimes these medications cause constipation.



Tips to prevent constipation at home:

- Drink at least 1½ litres or 6 to 8 glasses of water a day. This will help you to have a soft stool.
- People with heart failure should not drink a lot of fluids. Talk to your doctor, nurse or ask to see a dietitian. They can help you find ways to prevent constipation that is safe for you.
- Exercise and activity help your bowels to keep moving. Walking is a good way to increase activity.
- Adding fibre to your diet is a good way to prevent or treat constipation. Foods that have fibre include whole grain breads and cereals, bran, fresh fruit, vegetables and legumes.



Talk to your family doctor or pharmacist if you have questions or concerns about constipation or how to treat it at home.

When should I see my doctors for follow-up?

You will need to see your surgeon or family doctor 2 weeks after surgery to have the clips taken out of your incisions.

If your surgeon removes your clips you may want to see your family doctor within a month of surgery so that he or she can keep updated on your progress.

If your family doctor removes your clips you will be given an appointment to see your surgeon about one month after surgery.

Your surgeon will decide at your first visit when he or she will see you again in follow up.

