



Interventional radiologists are board-certified experts who deliver minimally invasive treatments with less risk, less pain and less recovery time than traditional surgery. Most interventional radiology (IR) procedures are delivered via catheters through a tiny nick in the skin and use different types of radiology imaging guidance, including x-ray, CT scanning and ultrasound, to deliver precise treatment. For many of the therapies, patients receive medicine in their veins through an IV that helps them relax (sedation) or, in some cases, patients receive anesthesia. Many treatments are performed on an outpatient basis or with a short overnight stay. Learn more or find an interventional radiologist near you at sirweb.org.

SAMPLE

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For more information on how interventional radiology can help you, the Society of Interventional Radiology's website, sirweb.org, provides easy-to-use tools to find a local interventional radiologist. He or she will be able to answer any additional questions you may have.

FIND US ON
sirweb.org



Peripheral arterial disease

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The vision to heal™

What is peripheral arterial disease (PAD)?

PAD occurs when the blood vessels to your arms or legs narrow or become clogged. This most often results from hardening of your arteries or "atherosclerosis."

You may have PAD if you experience the following in your arms or legs during activity:

- Pain and cramping
- Numbness
- Tingling
- Weakness
- Burning

You may be more likely to have PAD if (among other factors) you :

- Have high cholesterol
- Have high blood pressure
- Have diabetes
- Are a smoker

An interventional radiologist can help determine if you have PAD through an examination using imaging techniques such as ultrasound, CT and MRI.



Interventional radiology treatments

Lifestyle changes and medications are the most important part of PAD treatment. Lifestyle modifications may include:

- Eating a healthy, low-fat diet
- Getting regular exercise
- Quitting smoking
- Taking medicine to lower your blood pressure and cholesterol
- Taking medicine to help control your blood sugar (in cases of diabetes)

If these lifestyle changes aren't enough, your interventional radiologist, after meeting with you, may recommend a minimally invasive treatment.

In most cases, the interventional radiologist will make a small incision in your groin and guide a very thin catheter through your blood vessels to the blockage or narrowed artery. Depending on where the blockage is and how it looks, the interventional radiologist may treat it in several possible ways, such as:

- **Angioplasty:** Inserting and inflating a tiny balloon into the blood vessel to open it and improve blood flow
- **Atherectomy:** Shaving down the area of narrowing using a tiny mechanism at the end of the catheter
- **Stenting:** Inserting a tiny metal tube called a stent to hold the blood vessel open

What should you expect after treatment?

Once the treatment is completed, the interventional radiologist removes the catheter and applies pressure to the tiny incision in your groin to allow it to heal. You will then lie flat on your back for several hours. Usually, you will be able to go home the same day, but there is a small chance you will be observed overnight and discharged in the morning.

After the treatment, your interventional radiologist may prescribe medication to prevent your blood from clotting at the site of treatment. During a period of regular follow-up appointments, which may include ultrasound or other imaging tests, your interventional radiologist will monitor your progress after the therapy.

Recovery

Due to the minimally invasive nature of the treatments performed by an interventional radiologist, the recovery time is often very short.

Follow-up

Your interventional radiologist is part of your clinical care team and will work closely with the other members of your health care team to ensure that you receive the best possible care. This includes follow-up during your hospital stay and after you are discharged. During your follow-up appointment, your interventional radiologist will evaluate your progress and address any remaining issues or symptoms that you may have.

