

This is problems to do with circulation. (Is the closed network of blood vessels in the body).

What to look for

- aching legs
- bulging, bluish vessels in an aching leg.
- a painful vein.

Everybody may experience circulatory problems infrequently. Many people, however, must cope with this sensation on a daily basis. This condition, called intermittent claudication, is caused by lack of blood to the affected area. This can be due to hardening of the arteries. There are many other forms of circulation problems as well. Most circulation conditions can be treated at home or with a doctor's supervision.

Circulation starts with vessels known as arteries which carry blood filled with oxygen from the heart to the rest of the body; veins return blood with no oxygen to the heart. These vessels can become blocked and this is when circulatory problems arise. These problems can start in a number of ways.

Causes

There is usually more than one cause to circulatory problems. Hardening of the arteries can become more prolific with age. Women are more likely than men to develop varicose veins. Hereditary plays a part as does the type of lifestyles people lead.

Other risk factors for poor circulation are smoking, obesity, and prolonged periods of sitting or standing. Women taking the contraceptive pill are more prone to circulatory problems, as are people with diabetes.

Traditional Treatment

There is a great deal the patient can do for themselves at home to improve circulation. If these do not succeed, many other options are available to those who suffer from circulatory problems. Take the time to learn about your options, then decide which treatment program will work best for you.

Of course the cause of the circulatory problem will have to be diagnosed by your doctor before suggesting a treatment.

Normally a treatment consisting of...

- regular aerobic exercise
- good balanced nutrition.
- to lose weight if obesity is the problem
- and to stop old habits that interfere with circulation such as smoking.
- aspirin can also aid swelling

For more severe cases, treatment options range from drug therapy to surgery.

Dietary Considerations

As a general rule, your diet should be low in fat and high in fibre. Eat more whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables. Avoid caffeinated drinks.

If you suffer from hardened arteries, eat more fish. For dessert, try pineapple, it is very good for the circulation.

Healthful doses of certain vitamins and minerals may also improve your circulation. vitamin C, vitamin E, and niacin, all of which are believed to have a dilating effect on blood vessels, may help to get the blood flowing and make walking less painful. However, consult a doctor or nutritionist before using niacin, as it can cause uncomfortable flushing. Magnesium supplements also may help dilate the vessels and alleviate arterial spasms.

Personal Care

- Regular exercise
- If you are taking birth-control pills, switch to another form of contraception.
- Stop smoking.
- Dress warmly in winter especially keep your feet warm

When to seek further professional advice

- you experience sudden and severe pain
- you develop skin ulcers, skin discolouration, or sores that don't heal.