

Care Gram

Peripheral Vascular Tests

Date of Test: _____ **Test Time:** _____

About the Tests

Peripheral vascular testing is a painless, noninvasive procedure. It helps your doctor look at possible circulation disorders. A special probe (a doppler) is used with water-based gel on the skin. This probe is used to pick up the sound of the blood flow. Testing is done by specially trained staff. Test results are read by a vascular surgeon. The 5 types of tests are: abdominal, arterial, cerebrovascular (carotid artery studies), AAA (abdominal aortic aneurysm) screening, and venous studies. Please see the checked boxes below for information on your test.

Allowing Time

The tests take from 30 to 60 minutes except for AAA screening, which takes only about 10 to 15 minutes. Certain tests may be repeated for follow-up care.

Registering

Please report directly to the Vascular Lab. It is located on the first floor of Licking Memorial Hospital. Report to this area 15 minutes before your scheduled test. Enter through the John and Mary Alford Surgery Pavilion lobby. Follow the signs to the Vascular Lab. Please use the computer screen in the waiting area to sign in.

AAA Screening Test

The abdominal aorta (large blood vessel) supplies blood to the organs in the abdomen, pelvis, and to the legs. An AAA is a “bulge” in the wall of the aorta. Most patients with AAA have no symptoms. But if the AAA ruptures, the chance of death is very high. The reason for AAA screening is to find the aneurysm before it gets too big and ruptures. Ultrasound is used to evaluate the aorta for size.

You should have this screening if you have at least one of the following risk factors:

- You are a **male** or **female** and have a family history of abdominal aortic aneurysm
- You are a **male** or **female** age 65 to 75 who has smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your lifetime

Certain other risk factors such as high blood pressure may apply beyond these. Be sure you discuss this test with your physician.



**Licking Memorial
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1616-0564
03/07/2011
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It is important to note that Medicare will cover this one-time screening ultrasound only if the following applies:

- You get a screening referral from your doctor as a result of your “**Welcome to Medicare**” physical exam
- You must receive the physical exam and the screening ultrasound referral (not the ultrasound exam itself) **within the first twelve months** that you have Medicare Part B

Preparation: Nothing to eat or drink after 10:00 p.m., the night before your test. It is best to have a liquid supper and no carbonated drinks for 24 hours before your test. You may take your regular medications with sips of water. You should wear loose fitting clothes around your waist. During this test you will lay on your back to get the best pictures.

Abdominal Tests

Abdominal testing uses ultrasound to look at blood flow in the arteries and veins of the kidneys and/or liver. This test may be done for high blood pressure and some liver conditions. During the test, you may need to lie on your side or back to get the best pictures.

Preparation: Nothing to eat or drink after 10:00 p.m., the night before your test. No pop (carbonated beverage) for 24 hours before your test. You may take your medications. You should wear loose fitting clothes around your waist.

Arterial Tests

An arterial test studies the blood flow in the arms, legs, fingers, or toes. It is done while the patient is lying flat in bed.

- Blood pressure cuffs are placed around the ankle, calves, thighs, arms, and digits (fingers)
- The cuffs are filled with air by a special machine and a pulse waveform is recorded
- The cuffs are filled again and the actual blood pressure of that section of leg, arm, or digit (finger) is checked

The doctor looks at how the blood is carried from your heart to your arms, legs, or feet.

No preparation is needed. You may eat and take your medications. You may be asked to remove stockings, slacks, or trousers for leg studies, and shirts or blouses for arm studies. Underwear is not removed for this test. Wraps such as Ace® bandages on your legs or other types of support stockings should be removed at least 30 minutes before your test.

Cerebrovascular Tests

A cerebrovascular test studies the carotid arteries in the neck. These important arteries carry blood to the brain. Early detection of disease in these arteries is important in the prevention of a stroke.

A carotid study uses ultrasound technology. It sends sound waves through the skin to “see” blood flowing through the artery.

This ultrasound shows a picture of the artery, measures blood flow, spots blockage or buildup of plaque, and gives a sound recording of the blood. The pictures are reviewed by the doctor and saved to compare with future studies.

No preparation is needed. You may eat and take your medications. You should wear loose fitting clothes around the neck.

Venous Tests

A venous test uses ultrasound technology as well. This test is usually ordered by your doctor to check for blood clots in the leg or arm.

- You are placed in a slightly slanted position with the head high and the feet low
- A special gel is applied to the skin
 - The gel is non-greasy and water-based
- A special probe (a doppler) is gently rotated over the surface of the skin
 - This will pick up the sound of blood flowing through a vessel
 - The technologist listens to certain veins to see if the sound is normal or abnormal
- Certain veins are reviewed for blockage
 - They can be seen on a video screen
- This test may also evaluate the veins for venous insufficiency (a condition in which the leg veins have trouble sending blood from the legs back to the heart), which can cause varicose veins, swelling, leg ulcers, and other ongoing leg problems

The staff will report the results of your test to your doctor as soon as possible. You will be given instructions before you go home.

No preparation is needed. You may eat and take your medications. You may be asked to remove stockings, slacks, or trousers for leg studies, and shirts or blouses for arm studies. Underwear is not removed for this test. Wraps such as Ace® bandages on your legs or other types of support stockings should be removed at least 30 minutes before your test.

On the Day of the Test

Please leave valuables at home (like money, credit cards, and checkbooks). The Vascular Lab cannot be responsible for any lost or misplaced personal items during procedures. Be sure to bring medical cards and a photo ID.

Finding Out the Results

The final results of the tests will be ready in 3 to 5 days. You will find out the results of the test from the doctor who ordered it. Please call your doctor's office if you have not received the results in 1 week.

Appointment Reminder

If you have any questions about your test, please call the Vascular Lab at (740) 348-4141. If you need to cancel your appointment, please call Central Scheduling at (740) 348-4722.