

Peripheral artery disease: Overlooked and underdiagnosed

Run time :45

LEDE: It's a hard-to-pronounce condition, but it's one to take seriously because it can lead to loss of limbs. If you have persistent pain, numbness or cramping in your arms or legs, you should talk to a doctor about peripheral artery disease. Tim Ditman of OSF HealthCare has more.

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PAD occurs when arteries that supply blood to the arms and legs become blocked by substances commonly known as plaque.

OSF cardiologist Doctor Sampath Kumar:

"We see this more in people who smoke. People who are not as active tend to present much later because they don't have the symptoms which are typical. So seeking early care and regular care with a physician would be an important piece."

Diabetes and high cholesterol are also risks.

Treatment of PAD might start with a scan of your blood flow. From there, a doctor may recommend medication, lifestyle changes or surgery in more serious cases.

I'm Tim Ditman.

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TAG: September is PAD awareness month, making it a perfect time to talk to your health care provider if you think it's affecting you, whether you're young or old.