**Diet:** Reduction of cholesterol and saturated fats in the diet and maintenance of normal weight may decrease the risks of atherosclerosis.

**Hypertension and Diabetes:** Regular check-ups are a necessity. Keeping doctor’s appointments and following their instruction cannot be overemphasized.

**Discharge**
Prior to discharge a prescription would be sent to the supplier with a view to arranging the delivery of the machine for you in hospital or at home. You will have to arrange for the rental of the machine by contacting the supplier after the prescription is sent. A letter would be sent to the GP and copied to the public health nurse so that you can be followed up at home.

**Duration & Application**
The program is for 90 days and during this treatment you will be seen in the Art Assist outpatient & vascular lab every four weeks for further assessment. You will be expected to use the machine for four to eight hours/day in sessions of 3-4 hours at a time, depending on the indication for its use and your response to treatment. You will be shown how to apply the straps and operate the machine whilst in hospital and by the Art Assist representative upon delivery at home. If you have any queries regarding the clinical symptoms, the machine and its accessories do not hesitate to contact us for assistance.

**References**
Improving Walking Ability and Ankle Brachial Pressure Indices in Symptomatic Peripheral Vascular Disease with Intermittent Pneumatic Foot Compression: A Prospective Controlled Study with One-year Follow-up. Delis, K.; Nicolaides, AN; Wolfe, JHN; and Stansby, G. Imperial College School of Medicine, St. Mary’s Hospital, London, UK. J Vasc Surg 2000; 31:650-61.

Non-operative Active Management of Critical Lower Limb Ischaemia (CLI): Initial Experience Using a Sequential Compression Biomechanical Device (SCBD) for Acute Limb Salvage in CLI. Sultan, S.; Esan, O.; Fahy, A. Western Vascular Institute, University Hospital Galway, Ireland. 2006.


**Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)**

**Improve Blood Flow to Your Lower Limbs**

**ARTASSIST®**
**The Arterial Assist Device™**

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Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) of the lower extremities is a condition in which the arteries in the legs begin to narrow, resulting in a reduction of blood flow. PAD is caused by atherosclerosis, which is plaque build-up or "hardening of the arteries".

Eventually the artery may become so narrowed or completely blocked that the blood can no longer flow freely and you may feel pain, even during rest. This is called Rest Pain. Without a sufficient supply of oxygen, tissue below the blockage may die (ulceration and gangrene).

Art Assist

The Art Assist Device is an "external pneumatic compression device" i.e. a device that massages your foot, ankle and calf to improve your circulation. It has been shown to triple blood flow, and in so doing, dramatically increases pain-free walking distance, heals diabetic and non-diabetic arterial ulcers, and saves limbs in cases unsuitable for surgery. This is a mobile device that you can use in the comfort of your own home.

Understanding Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) of the lower extremities is a condition in which the arteries in the legs begin to narrow, resulting in a reduction of blood flow. PAD is caused by atherosclerosis, which is plaque build-up or "hardening of the arteries".

Art Assist is recommended for:

Claudication ("to limp")

Pain is produced by ischemic (lacking in blood supply) muscle during exercise. An ache or cramp develops in the calf, thigh or buttocks. Rest, even standing for a short period of time, will result in relief of symptoms.

Rest Pain

This symptom suggests advanced arterial disease. A severe and steady aching or pain in the toes, heel or forefoot may be unbearable and keep you awake at night. Blood flow is influenced by gravity, therefore temporary relief may be obtained by keeping the extremity dependent for short periods of time.

Tissue Necrosis (gangrene):

This is the most advanced stage of arterial disease. As the disease progresses, areas of trauma may not heal, and skin breakdown occurs, leading to gangrene (death of tissue).

Diabetic Foot Ulcers

Non-healing Arterial Ulcers

Risk Factors

We do not understand why atherosclerosis develops in the arteries, but it is more likely to occur in people past the age 45. Men are affected more than women. Individuals with peripheral arterial disease share many of the same characteristics:

- Heart Disease
- High Blood Pressure
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Elevated Cholesterol Levels
- Family History of Vascular Disease
- Lack of exercise
- Changes in the blood

Reducing Risk Factors

We cannot totally prevent the occurrences of atherosclerosis or alter the part heredity plays in its development however most of the risk factors can be controlled by re-evaluating your lifestyle and making the necessary changes.

Smoking: Tobacco causes constriction of the blood vessels, thus decreasing the flow of blood, and exacerbates the atherosclerosis. Therefore all attempts should be made to stop smoking.

Exercise: Exercise has been known to improve collateral circulation. It is important to gradually increase physical activity and begin an exercise program as directed by your physician.