You have had a **peripheral vascular angioplasty**. This is a surgery to open arteries (blood vessels) in your legs that are blocked with plaque (see Figure 1).

During this surgery, we insert a catheter (thin tube) with a balloon at the tip, usually through the groin, into the blocked artery.

At the blockage, we inflate the balloon, pushing the plaque out against the artery wall. This widens the artery and restores the flow of blood.

The surgery can help reduce the symptoms of poor blood flow, such as pain, numbness, and wounds that will not heal. The surgery may also prevent the need to amputate the leg or foot.

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**Read this information to learn:**

- What activities you can do when you get home
- How to care for your puncture site
- What problems to look out for
- When you will have a follow-up.

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**Figure 1.** The illustration shows how peripheral artery disease can affect arteries in the legs. “A” shows a normal artery with normal blood flow. “B” shows an artery with plaque buildup that’s partially blocking blood flow. By National Heart Lung and Blood Insitute (NIH) (National Heart Lung and Blood Insitute (NIH)) [Public domain].

Adapted from the pamphlet, “After your Carotid Endarterectomy”, with permission from the University Health Network Patient and Caregiver Education Program.
What symptoms might I have after surgery?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOM</th>
<th>WHAT TO DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROIN PUNCTURE SITE:</strong> You may notice a small lump (the size of a large marble) and/or some bruising.</td>
<td>• These are normal and should resolve within 2 to 3 weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAIN:</strong> You may have groin discomfort.</td>
<td>• We may give you a prescription for pain medicine at the time of discharge. Do not operate a motor vehicle for 24 hours or while on pain medicine as it may make you less alert.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Otherwise, you may use over-the-counter Tylenol® Extra-Strength (acetaminophen) or Advil® (ibuprofen) for pain relief.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CONSTIPATION:</strong> Constipation is common when taking prescription pain medicines and being less active.</td>
<td>• Drink plenty of fluids, unless your doctor tells you otherwise.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• If you have no dietary requirements, eat foods high in fibre, such as bran breads and cereals, berries, dried fruit, or prune juice.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• If needed, take a mild laxative.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• If the issue persists, visit your family doctor.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FEELING TIRED, TROUBLE SLEEPING:</strong> You may feel tired after surgery. This is normal and may last several days.</td>
<td>• Take a nap every day. Go to bed and get up at the same time each day.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Increase your activity as you recover.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EMOTIONS:</strong> You may feel frustrated or discouraged for several days or weeks after surgery. These feelings are normal. As you recover and regain your strength, this should improve.</td>
<td>• Take one day at a time. Give yourself enough time to recover.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If these feelings persist, visit your family doctor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### How do I take care of myself at home?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>WHAT TO DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **WOUND CARE** | • Keep your puncture site dry for 48 hours after surgery. After 48 hours:  
  • Remove the Band-Aid®. Leave the steri-strips (little white tape) in place.  
  • You may shower. Cleanse the groin using mild soap. Pat the area dry with a towel.  
  • Do not immerse the puncture site in water, such as take a bath or go swimming, for 1 week.  
  • The steri-strips may start to peel off. You can remove them 7 to 10 days after surgery. |
| **ACTIVITY**   | • Walk slowly and climb stairs carefully for the first few days after surgery. Refrain from tiring activities for 1 week to allow the puncture site to heal.  
  • Do not lift more than 10 pounds (5 kilograms) for the first week after surgery. Examples would be a bag of groceries, children or small pets.  
  • Do not do strenuous exercises, such as aerobics or weight lifting, until you see your surgeon at your follow-up visit. |
| **DRIVING**    | • If you are not taking prescription medicines, you may drive a motor vehicle 2 days after your surgery. |
| **RETURN TO WORK** | • **You will be off work for at least 1 week.** Ask your surgeon when it is safe to return to work. |
| **SEXUAL ACTIVITY** | • Refrain from sex for 48 hours after your surgery to avoid problems with your groin puncture site. |
When should I seek medical help?

Go to the nearest Emergency room or call your surgeon right away if:

- **The lump at your puncture site is pulsating (beating):** Cover it loosely with a bandage. Do not press on the lump. The lump may be pulsating because there is a problem in the wall of your artery.

- **The puncture site starts to bleed:** Lie down. Have a family member press firmly on your puncture site with 3 fingers. Call an ambulance.

- **The puncture site becomes red, swollen, or is draining pus (yellowish, bad-smelling liquid).**

- **You have pain in your lower abdomen (belly) or back.**

- **You develop a fever (temperature at or above 38°C or 100.4°F) and/or you feel chills.**

- **Your leg or foot:** Feels very painful
  - Becomes cold or turns pale/white
  - Becomes weak or numb.

If you do not have someone to drive you to the hospital, **call 9-1-1 for an ambulance.** Leave the front door open so the paramedics can enter your home.

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**Follow-up Appointments**

**APPOINTMENT WITH FAMILY DOCTOR:** Contact your family doctor for a follow-up appointment **within 1 week of your surgery.** At this visit, your doctor will review medicine changes and manage any symptoms.

*My follow-up appointment with my family doctor is on _____________________________ at ____________.*

**APPOINTMENT WITH SURGEON:** Contact your surgeon’s office for a follow-up appointment **within 2 to 3 weeks of your surgery.**

*My follow-up appointment with my surgeon is on _________________________________ at _____________.*

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**Who do I call for more information?**

If you have any further questions or you would like to book your 2-week follow-up appointment with your surgeon, please call:

**Vascular Surgery office**

Dr. K. Graybiel   Dr. A. Beder   Dr. L. Figueroa

**Tel:** (416) 742-2961