

Glossary of Terms

- **Abdominal Exam:** The examination of the abdomen used by physicians to detect an abdominal aortic aneurysm.
- **Angiogram:** A diagnostic test requiring the insertion of a catheter into an artery or vein through, which dye is injected and x-rays are taken to view the adequacy of the circulation of the vessels viewed.
- **Anticoagulation:** Any substance that prevents or slows the clotting of blood. Also known as “blood thinner”.
- **Aorta:** The largest artery that supplies the body with oxygenated blood. The Aorta begins at the heart and travels down through the abdomen where it branches into smaller arteries supplying blood to the legs.
- **Arteriogram (angiogram):** A diagnostic test requiring the insertion of a catheter into an artery through, which dye is injected and x-rays are taken to view the arterial circulation.
- **Artery:** A blood vessel that carries oxygen-rich blood from the heart to the rest of the body.
- **Arteritis:** Inflammatory process involving an artery which may cause an aneurysm or narrowing of the artery.
- **Atherosclerosis (Arteriosclerosis):** The thickening and hardening of the arterial wall caused by the build up of cholesterol and fatty deposits inside the artery.
- **Atherectomy:** A procedure used to remove plaque usually from an artery using a catheter and a rotating blade that destroys the plaque and removes the debris from the vessel.
- **Balloon Angioplasty:** Enlarging a narrowed artery by inflating a balloon inside the narrowed vessel thereby increasing blood flow through the vessel.
- **Bypass:** An operation in which an artificial tube or a length of vein taken from an area of the body is attached above and below the blocked artery or vein to circumvent the blockage and restore blood flow below.
- **Capillaries:** The smallest vessels in the body that connect the ends of the smallest arteries to the beginning of the smallest veins.
- **Carotid Artery:** The major artery that supplies the brain with arterial blood. There are two; one on each side of the neck. A blockage of one can cause either temporary symptoms of a stroke or can be the cause of a permanent stroke effecting the side of the body opposite the carotid blockage, i.e. occlusion of the left carotid causes weakness or symptoms on the right side of the body and vice-versa).
- **Catheter:** A flexible hollow tube that can be inserted into a vessel through which, diagnostic tools, balloons for angioplasty, medications and dye can be injected and objects can be removed from within a vessel.

- **Cholesterol:** A fatty substance found in animal tissue. If a diet is high in cholesterol, it may contribute to the development of atherosclerosis.
- **Circulation:** The movement of blood through the body.
- **Collateral:** The enlargement of a branch vessel that maintains blood flow beyond a blocked artery or vein.
- **Claudication:** Muscle cramping occurring when exercising the legs (i.e. walking, running) which stops with rest.
- **Computerized Tomography (CT) Scan:** A diagnostic specialized x-ray that takes rapid sliced images of the body.
- **C.V.A.:** Cerebral Vascular Accident. This is also known as a STROKE.
- **Diastolic Blood Pressure:** The lower number of a taken blood pressure (i.e. 120/80).
- **Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT):** A blood clot which forms in a major vein producing extremity swelling and pain.
- **Doppler:** A tool used to detect blood flow in an artery or vein.
- **Embolectomy/Thrombectomy:** The removal of a blood clot from a blood vessel.
- **Embolus:** A piece of a blood clot or plaque that breaks off and travels to a smaller vessel where it lodges and causes a blockage of blood flow.
- **Endarterectomy:** The surgical removal of an atherosclerotic build-up from the inner wall of an artery.
- **Endoleak:** Abnormal leakage of blood into an aortic aneurysm which has been treated with an aortic stent
- graft.
- **Endovascular:** Inside a blood vessel.
- **Femoral Artery:** The main artery which supplies blood to the lower extremity.
- **Gangrene:** Tissue death caused by inadequate blood flow.
- **Grafts/Bypass:** An operation in which an artificial tube or a length of vein taken from an area of the body is attached above and below the blocked artery or vein to circumvent the blockage and restore blood flow below
- **Hypertension:** High Blood pressure.
- **Iliac Arteries:** The two arteries that branch off from the end of the aorta, providing the legs with their arterial blood supply.

- **Infrarenal:** Portion of aorta below the renal arteries.
- **Invasive:** Diagnostic tests or procedures, which involve the insertion of instruments thru the skin; as in surgery or the insertion of catheters for the injection of dye, or placement of balloons or other therapeutic devices.
- **Laser Therapy:** Use of an intense beam of light to open or close a blood vessel.
- **Lower Extremity Arterial Disease:** The term for disease of the arteries in the legs.
- **Lumen:** The hollow inside of a blood vessel.
- **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI):** A diagnostic test that uses radio waves and a strong magnet to image soft tissues in the body. MRA images the arteries, MRV images the veins.
- **Non-Invasive:** A term used to describe diagnostic tests that do not require needles, dyes, or the breakage of skin.
- **Occlusion:** A term use to describe a complete blockage of a vessel.
- **Paralysis:** The loss of the ability to voluntarily move or feel part or parts of the body.
- **Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD):** Atherosclerotic disease of arteries (also known as hardening of the arteries)which supply blood to the extremities.
- **Peritoneum:** Lining of the abdomen which contains the abdominal organs.
- **Plaque:** Cholesterol or fatty material that collects and builds up on the inside lining of an artery.
- **Platelets:** Specialized oval shaped discs that play an important role in the ability of the body to clot especially at the site of an injury either internal or external.
- **Polyunsaturated Fat:** A dietary fat that can help reduce blood cholesterol levels. Polyunsaturated fat is found in canola, sunflower, corn, olive and soybean oils.
- **Renal Arteries:** Blood vessels that provide oxygenated blood to the kidneys.
- **Rest Pain:** Pain located in the foot near the toes. It is a symptom of poor arterial blood flow. The pain is usually worse at night and oftentimes is relieved by walking or lowering the leg off the side of the bed. Rest pain is a precursor to gangrene.
- **Retroperitoneal:** The anatomic space between the peritoneum and back muscles. The aorta and kidneys are located here.
- **Saturated Fat:** A dietary fat that raises blood cholesterol levels. It is found in meat, cheese, butter, coconut oil and palm oil.
- **Sepsis:** Condition caused by inflammation or infection inside the body. Fever is a common symptom.

- **Sign:** Physical evidence of disease.
- **Staple:** A metal clip used to close surgical wounds internal or external.
- **Stenosis:** A narrowing of a blood vessel.
- **Stent:** A man made device placed in the lumen of a artery or vein to prevent collapsing of the vessel or kinking.
- **Stroke:** A condition caused by the interruption of the blood supply to the brain either from a blockage in an artery or some other event causing a significant loss of blood and oxygen to a part of the brain tissue causing injury. Symptoms include all or some of the following, paralysis on one side of the body, can be the entire body, loss of consciousness, inability to speak, inability to understand written or verbal stimuli, loss of vision, facial drooping, and inability to swallow.
- **Suture:** Material used to close the edges of a wound, a common term is also, stitches.
- **Symptom:** A symptom is the subjective complaints of the patient which may or may not be indicative of a particular disease.
- **Systolic Blood Pressure:** The higher number of a taken blood pressure (i.e. 120/80).
- **Takayasu's Arteritis/Takayasu Disease:** Specific type of arteritis involving the aorta and its major branches. Named after Takayasu, a ophthalmologist who first recognized the disease.
- **Thrombolytic Therapy:** the use of medication that has the ability to dissolve blood clots in a vein or artery.
- **Thrombus (Embolus):** A blood clot. Can occur in either a vein or an artery.
- **Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA):** A decrease of blood flow to part of the brain, resulting in signs and symptoms of a stroke which last less than 24 hours. TIA's should not be ignored, they are often considered to be the first warning sign of a stroke.
- **Ulcer:** A sore or breakdown of the skin surface, which may be due to poor blood supply.
- **Ultrasound:** A diagnostic test that uses sound waves to image tissues and organs.
- **Vein:** A vein is a blood vessel that carries blood back to the heart to be re-supplied with oxygen.
- **Ventilator:** A machine that is used to assist individuals who are unable to breath on their own.