Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) is More Prevalent Among African American Populations

In a U.S. sample of 2,174 persons aged 40 years and older, African Americans were 2.8 times as likely as non-Hispanic whites to screen positive for PAD.\(^1\)

PAD is more common in African Americans than any other racial or ethnic group because conditions that increase the risk for developing PAD, such as diabetes and high blood pressure, are more common among African Americans.\(^2\)

An estimated one in every four African Americans between the ages of 65 and 74 has diabetes.

High blood pressure affects more than 40 percent of African Americans. It also develops earlier in life in blacks than in whites and is usually more severe.\(^3\)

When compared to non-Hispanic whites with PAD, African Americans with PAD have more severe disease and a greater reduction in walking distance, speed, and/or stair climbing.\(^4\)

Walking impairment in African Americans as compared to non-Hispanic whites is largely explained by a higher prevalence of asymptomatic disease in African Americans.\(^5\)
African Americans have a higher prevalence of asymptomatic PAD (i.e., evidence of disease without leg symptoms). African Americans with asymptomatic disease are at increased risk for a delay in care and continuation of high-risk behaviors, including a sedentary lifestyle that predisposes them to disease progression.\(^vi\)

**PAD-related amputation rates higher among African Americans**

- Several studies have reported minority patients are much less likely to receive preventive vascular screenings and procedures.\(^vii\)

- Among PAD patients, minorities are less likely to have limb-sparing procedures such as angioplasty and lower extremity bypass and more likely to have amputation.\(^viii\)

- Traditionally underserved minority populations are at elevated risk of developing diabetes, PAD and undergoing amputation. African-Americans are 77% more likely to develop diabetes than their white counterparts which is a leading risk factor for PAD. They are also at increased risk of developing diabetic foot ulcers and more than twice as likely to develop PAD.\(^ix\)

- Compared to non-Hispanic whites, African Americans have 1.5 times the risk of limb loss attributable to PAD.\(^x\)

- Data showing higher rates of primary and repeat amputation for African American patients at hospitals with significant vascular surgery capacity and aggressive limb salvage policies, suggest that these rates may be even higher at less well equipped institutions. Improving access to primary and preventive care for lower-income patients could reduce amputation rates among African Americans.\(^xi\)

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\(^iii\) http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HighBloodPressure/UnderstandYourRiskforHighBloodPressure/High-Blood-Pressure-and-African-Americans_UCM_301832_Article.jsp

\(^iv\) African Americans and Peripheral Arterial Disease: A Review Article: http://www.hindawi.com/journals/isrn/2012/165653/#B2


\(^viii\) Disparities in Amputations in Minorities: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3111767/#CR6

\(^ix\) http://clinical.diabetesjournals.org/content/30/3/130.full


\(^xi\) Racial differences in primary and repeat lower extremity amputation: results from a multihospital study: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15886667