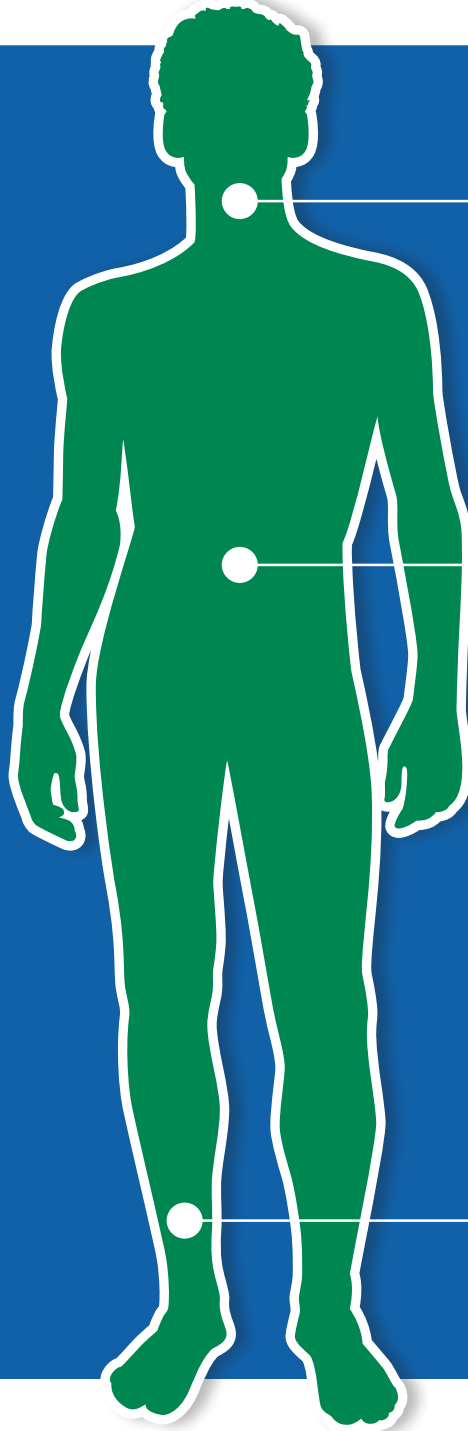


Detecting a Silent Killer

SCREENINGS FOR STROKE, ANEURYSM
& VASCULAR DISEASE



Southern Surgical
GROUP

A Lexington Medical Center Physician Practice



Vascular Disease

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cardiovascular disease accounts for more than 1/3 of all U.S. deaths. Cardiovascular disease refers to diseases of the heart as well as the arteries and veins that supply blood to the rest of the body, known as the circulatory system. When cardiovascular disease affects the circulatory system it is known as vascular disease.

Who is at Risk for Vascular Disease?

Many people are at risk for vascular disease; however, the risks are most profound in patients older than 50 with the following risk factors:

- family history of stroke, heart attack or aneurysm
- smoking
- high cholesterol
- high blood pressure
- diabetes

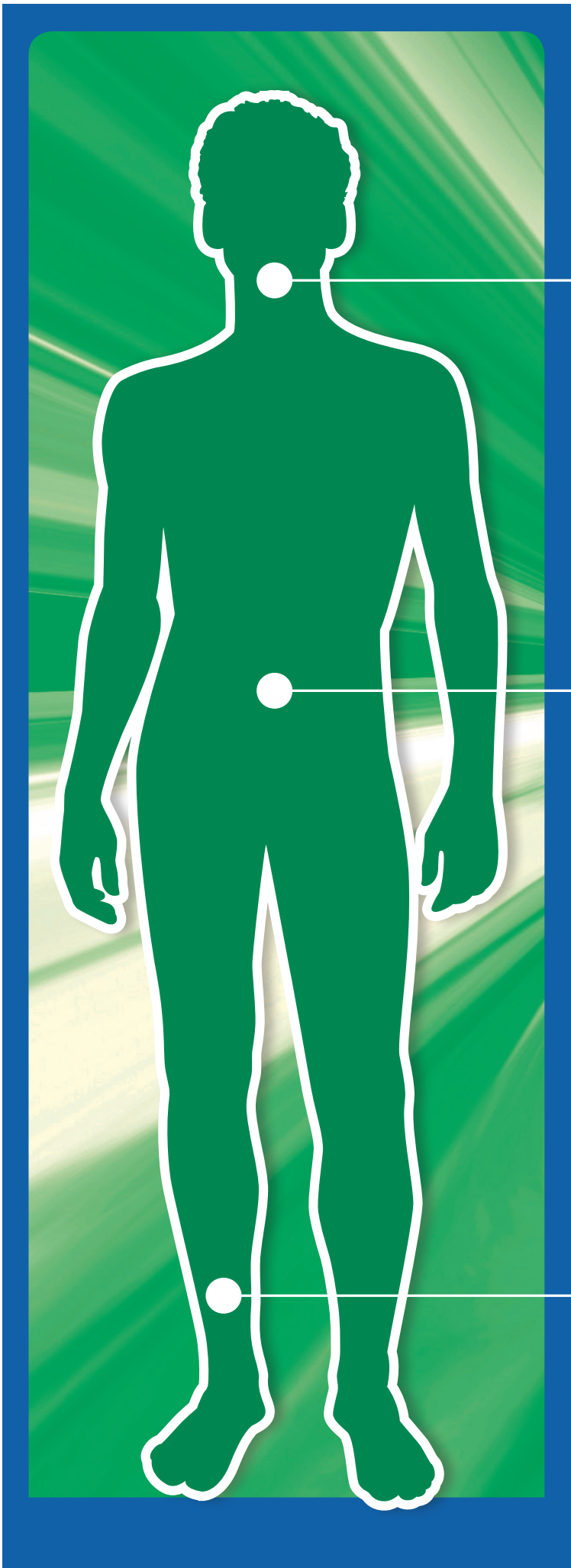
Vascular disease most commonly appears as:

- carotid artery disease;
- peripheral artery disease;
- aneurysm of the abdominal aorta.

These conditions can lead to poor quality of life, loss of limb and can even be life threatening.

Screenings

Screenings for carotid artery disease, abdominal aortic aneurysm and peripheral artery disease are safe, painless, non-invasive ultrasound exams that do not use needles, dyes, radiation or anesthesia. One of our registered sonographers will position you comfortably on an exam table to perform the screening.



Carotid Artery Disease

What is carotid artery disease?

The carotid arteries are the blood vessels located on either side of the neck that carry oxygen-rich blood to the brain.

Carotid artery disease occurs when these arteries are narrowed or blocked by the build-up of plaque, which is called atherosclerosis. Over time, this narrowing may eventually become so severe that blood flow to the brain is decreased and may cause a stroke. A stroke can also occur if a piece of plaque or a blood clot breaks off from the wall of the carotid artery and travels to the smaller arteries of the brain.

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms

What is an abdominal aortic aneurysm?

The aorta is the largest artery in the body, starting at the heart and supplying blood to the lower body. Abdominal aortic aneurysm, commonly referred to as “Triple A” or “AAA,” is a ballooning or bulging of the aorta that forms a weak place in the artery wall. Often aneurysms grow slowly and there are no noticeable symptoms. Some aneurysms, however, may enlarge quickly and rupture without warning. Unfortunately, most people who suffer a ruptured aortic aneurysm do not survive.

Peripheral Artery Disease

What is an ankle-brachial index screening?

Peripheral artery disease, or PAD, is a hardening or build-up of plaque in the arteries of the lower extremities. This typically causes pain that can be significant enough to slow down walking. In severe blockages, PAD can lead to non-healing ulcers or gangrene.

What happens during a carotid artery screening?

After applying a hypoallergenic, water-based gel to both sides of your neck, the sonographer will place an ultrasound probe, called a transducer, on your neck. Images of your carotid arteries will appear on the ultrasound screen. The sonographer will look for any narrowing or evidence of disease.

What happens during an abdominal aortic aneurysm screening?

Please do not eat, smoke, chew gum or mints the morning of your exam. The sonographer will place a transducer on your abdomen after applying a hypoallergenic, water-based gel to the area. Images of your aorta will appear on the ultrasound screen. The sonographer will identify the largest area of your abdominal aorta to determine if there is an aneurysm. While this test is painless and non-invasive, some pressure may be applied to your abdomen while the sonographer obtains images.

What happens during a peripheral artery screening?

An ankle-brachial index (ABI) tests for PAD. The sonographer will place standard blood pressure cuffs around your ankles and arms. These cuffs will be inflated briefly. Once the cuffs have deflated, blood pressure measurements are taken using a special measuring instrument called a Doppler. We will then compare these findings and calculate a ratio. This calculation is your ABI.

What happens next?

We will send a copy of your screening results to you and your primary care provider. You will also be provided with information on reducing any possible risk factors for carotid artery disease, AAA or PAD. Your primary care doctor may recommend a follow-up visit based on your results.

If significant disease or symptoms are detected, we will offer you a complete ultrasound to determine the extent and severity of the disease. One of our board-certified surgeons will also be available to coordinate your care with your primary care provider. Depending on the severity of disease, surgical intervention may be necessary.

Southern Surgical Vascular Diagnostics is supported by a highly skilled staff and uses a variety of diagnostic equipment to offer a full range of diagnostic vascular ultrasound procedures.

Unlike many screening programs, all personnel are registered by the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers and our facility is accredited by the Intersocietal Commission Accreditation of Vascular Labs.

One of our experienced, board-certified vascular surgeons at Southern Surgical Group will read your screening. These surgeons can provide any follow-up care in cooperation with your primary care provider.



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