

# Do you suffer with circulation problems?

We often here people say they have “poor circulation”. However, there is no specific condition called “poor circulation”. There are many different causes of and conditions that can lead to poor circulation. Symptoms of these conditions vary from “cold hands”, pins and needles in hands and feet, numbness, varicose veins, leg cramps, a heavy feeling in the limbs, and swollen ankles right up to very serious and even life threatening conditions such as leg ulcers, gangrene, kidney failure and brain aneurisms.

Poor circulation is medically referred to as Vascular Disease. Vascular Disease includes any condition that affects your circulatory system including diseases of arteries, veins and lymph vessels as well as blood disorders that affect circulation. These include:

- Peripheral Artery Disease
- Renal Artery Disease
- Varicose Veins
- Venous Blood Clots
- Aneurysm
- Raynaud’s Disease
- Peripheral Venous Disease
- Erectile Dysfunction

Healthy arteries are flexible and elastic and blood runs through the veins as if they were lined with a nonstick surface that enhances blood flow like “Teflon”. As we age, this “Teflon” coating starts to get sticky, like “Velcro”, and this leads to many health risks. When arteries stiffen, they are more likely to clog with fatty substances such as cholesterol and cause heart attacks and strokes. Measuring the stiffness of your arteries can identify your risk of cardiovascular disease. Whelehans pharmacy in Mullingar now have a consultant in store who uses a BPro Cardio Device which identifies the flexibility of your arteries and provides critical information that can help you identify problems before they become life threatening. Book an appointment by calling us at 04493 34591. It now only costs €35.

## Atherosclerosis

Atherosclerosis occurs when arteries become clogged up by fatty substances, such as cholesterol. These substances are called plaques or atheromas. This build up of plaque is the root cause of various vascular diseases such as varicose veins, erectile dysfunction and Raynauds Disease. It also causes cardiovascular conditions such as angina, heart attack, stroke and peripheral vascular disease.

The plaques cause affected arteries to harden and narrow which is potentially dangerous for two reasons:

- Restricted blood flow can damage organs and stop them functioning properly.
- If a plaque ruptures, it can lead to a blood clot that blocks the blood supply to the heart, triggering a heart attack, or the brain, triggering a stroke.

## **Causes**

Certain factors increase the risk of atherosclerosis. These are mainly lifestyle related and include:

- smoking (probably the single biggest cause of most vascular diseases)
- a high-fat diet
- a lack of exercise
- being overweight or obese
- having either type 1 or type 2 diabetes
- having high blood pressure (hypertension)
- having high cholesterol

Over the course of years and decades, plaque build up narrows the arteries and makes them stiffer. This makes it harder for blood to flow through them. Clots may form in these narrowed arteries and block blood flow. Pieces of plaque can also break off and move to smaller blood vessels, blocking them. Either way, the blockage starves tissues of blood and oxygen, which can result in damage or tissue death. Apart from being a cause of heart attack and stroke, if a clot moves into an artery in the lungs, it can cause a pulmonary embolism which is a potentially life threatening clot in a blood vessel in the lungs. In some cases, the plaque can also cause a weakening of the wall of an artery. This can lead to an aneurysm. Aneurysms can rupture and cause bleeding that can be life threatening.

## **Prevention**

This can be achieved by making lifestyle changes, such as eating a healthier diet, increasing exercise, stopping smoking. There are several medications available to treat many of the underlying causes of blood vessel narrowing and hardening, such as a high cholesterol level and high blood pressure. Antiplatelet medication such as aspirin thins blood so helps prevent clots. In some cases surgery may be required to widen or bypass a section of a blocked or narrowed artery.

I have a more in-dept article on each of the main vascular diseases mentioned above including Atherosclerosis, Peripheral Artery Disease, Varicose Veins, Aneurysm, Raynaud's Disease, Venous Leg Ulcers and Erectile Dysfunction. Log on to [www.whelehans.ie/ailments](http://www.whelehans.ie/ailments) to view or ask a member of our staff for a free copy.

### **How old is your heart?**

Our arteries age due to their elasticity. Unfortunately, for some people due to many reasons their arteries may age prematurely. This may be due to genetic reasons or lifestyle factors such as smoking, lack of exercise, excess alcohol intake, poor diet and obesity. BPro Cardio Screen measures *cardio pulse wave* which determines the health of your arteries for your age based on their elasticity. In simple terms, it measures the “age of our heart”! It is now available from Whelehans Pharmacy Mullingar.

### **BPro Cardio Screen\***

It only takes our consultant a couple of minutes to measure your cardio pulse wave; it is very simple, and completely pain free. It is placed on your wrist like a wrist watch where a laser diode reads and calculates a wave signal that indicates the elasticity of large, small, and peripheral artery walls as well as tests for stress, central blood pressure, heart rate, and more. You will be provided a printed copy of the results of your Cardio Screen and our consultant will clearly explain the results and the level of your cardiovascular health. You will also be taught about some effective natural strategies you can implement that may help you prevent or reverse heart disease, diabetes, and other health issues, drug free

### **Can L’arginine benefit your heart?\***

L-arginine is best known for its cardiovascular benefits and can relax blood vessels. This reduces stress on the heart, improves circulation and lowers blood pressure. L’Arginine can increase blood flow without the side effects associated with some prescription vasodilators such as headaches and flushing. Reduced blood pressure may be seen within a few days of commencing L’Arginine. The benefits of L-arginine was part of the research that lead to three American scientists winning the 1998 Nobel Prize for Medicine. However, as of yet, research has not shown that L’arginine supplementation reduces the risk of heart attack. By naturally dilating blood vessels, it can also benefit many of the vascular diseases mentioned above. ProArgi-9 Plus is a supplement containing L’arginine, now available through Whelehans Pharmacy in Mullingar. We have discover many people, many from the Mullingar area who have tried ProArgi-9 Plus leads to a vast improvement in circulation conditions and perhaps in some cases life changing improvement.

\*Not meant as a substitute for proper medical assessment with your doctor and should not replace prescription medication

### **Did you know? We have 100,000 miles of blood vessels in a complex network throughout our body!**

For comprehensive and free health advice and information call in to Whelehans, log on to [www.whelehans.ie](http://www.whelehans.ie) or dial 04493 34591. You can also e-mail queries to [info@whelehans.ie](mailto:info@whelehans.ie).