

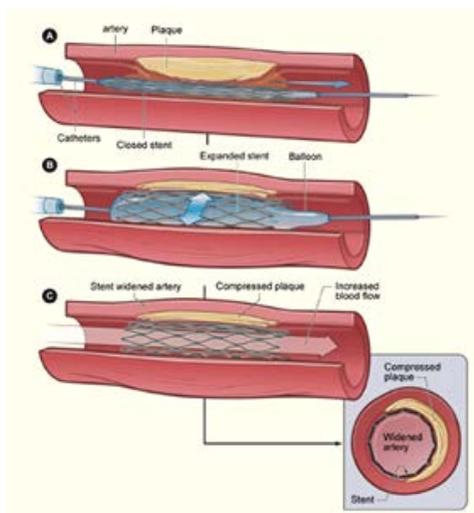
Angioplasty for Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD)

What is an angioplasty for PVD?

An angioplasty is a procedure to re-open a blood vessel that has become blocked.

PVD is caused when fatty deposits (plaque) gradually gather inside an artery (atherosclerosis). The plaque causes the artery to narrow (stenosis) reducing blood flow to the lower limbs (ischaemia).

Atherosclerosis is usually caused by lifestyle factors such as high blood pressure, smoking, stress, a high fat diet and diabetes.



What happens before my operation?

Before surgery, some patients attend a pre-admission clinic where the doctor will explain the surgery and you will sign a consent form.

At the clinic, the health care team will ask you about your health, medication and lifestyle. They may test your blood, take x-rays and an electrocardiogram (ECG).

Your doctor will talk to you about what medications to take before you come into hospital. It is important to tell your doctor if you are taking any blood thinning medications, such as aspirin, warfarin or clopidogrel (Plavix).

Please bring your medications into hospital with you.

If you use a dosette box or pill organiser to take your tablets, please ask your pharmacist to print out a list of your current medications so you can bring this to hospital.

If you do not need to attend a pre-admission clinic, we will telephone and tell you when you are scheduled for your operation and what to bring to hospital. You may also receive a letter informing you of your time and date of surgery.

Please make sure you confirm your date of surgery.

The day before your surgery, the hospital will call you between 2.30pm and 7pm to inform you of the time you need to stop eating and drinking and what time to come to hospital.

What will happen on the day of my surgery?

We ask that you shower before you come to hospital, and remove jewellery, make up, nail polish and fake nails. It is advised that you leave valuables such as jewellery and large sums of money at home to avoid the possibility of items being misplaced or stolen.

On the day of your surgery, please make your way to the St Vincent's Day of Surgery Admission (DOSA) area, which is located on the first floor of the In-patient Services Building, Princes Street, Fitzroy.

When you arrive the nursing staff will check your pulse and blood pressure.

You will need an anaesthetic for your surgery. The anaesthetist (the doctor who will give you the anaesthetic) will meet with you before your surgery to talk to you about your health and the best anaesthetic for you.

A local anaesthetic (anaesthetic that just numbs the area being operated on) is normally used for this surgery.

St Vincent's is a busy hospital so please be aware that you may need to wait up to three hours for your operation.

What happens after the surgery?

You will be taken to the recovery room, and then transferred to your ward. A nurse will monitor your blood pressure, pulse and temperature. Regular checks will be done on your groin to ensure there is no bleeding or swelling, as well as checking the blood circulation to your feet.

You may have an oxygen mask on to help you breathe and an intravenous (IV) drip in your arm giving you fluid. This will be removed once you are able to eat and drink. You will be allowed to eat and drink about two hours after surgery.

You may have a dressing on your groin area that may be blood stained or just a puncture site (a small cut). To reduce the risk of bleeding from your groin area you will need to remain in a flat position for four to six hours from the time you arrive in the recovery room.

Your pain may be treated in a number of ways. This will be decided by you and your doctors and nurses depending on the location and the type of pain you have. You may be given tablets or an injection by a nurse to help you feel better.

When can I go home?

You will be required to stay in hospital for one night and will be able to go home the morning after your surgery.

Patients are usually discharged at 10am so the room can be prepared for another patient.

Before you leave the ward someone will:

- make a follow-up appointment at St Vincent's Specialist Clinics for you
- send a letter from the hospital to your local doctor (GP)
- give you medication, if the doctor prescribes it
- give you a medical certificate if required (you will need to ask).

Please remember to take all your belongings including x-rays home with you.

What should I do once I get home?

Your doctor may recommend one week off work after the operation to give your body the best chance of recovery.

Shower or wash daily. Wash the wound area with mild soap and pat dry with a towel.

Refrain from smoking, as nicotine and carbon dioxide will continue to re-block your vessels, effectively undoing the operation.

Avoid doing any strenuous activity, especially lifting anything heavy (lift no more than 2-3kgs, or roughly the weight of a bag of oranges) for two weeks.

You should also avoid participating in sport for two weeks.

It is recommended that you take gentle walks three to four times a week. Maintain a healthy lifestyle including a low fat, low salt diet.

If you notice any discharge, swelling, hardness or redness on or around your wound or if your feet become cold, numb or change colour, go to the nearest emergency department or your local GP as soon as possible.

Contacts

Liaison Nurse

Tel: 9288 4853

Waiting List Officer

Tel: 9288 2270

This information sheet is intended as a guideline only. If you have further questions or concerns, please speak to your doctor.