

Intravascular lithotripsy for calcified arteries in peripheral arterial disease

Information for the public

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There is not enough evidence about how well this procedure works. So, it can only be done with special arrangements. This means you will have regular appointments afterwards to check how well it is working or if it has caused problems.

Peripheral arterial disease (PAD) is caused when a build-up of fatty substances (a plaque) in the arteries restricts blood supply to parts of the body, usually the legs. The plaque can harden (calcify) and become like bone. If PAD is severe, the affected part of the body can die and need amputating, or it can cause the person to die.

In this procedure, a long, thin, flexible tube (catheter) with a balloon at the end is inserted into the affected artery (intravascular). Acoustic pressure waves are sent from the balloon to soften the calcified plaque (lithotripsy) and allow the artery to widen. The catheter and balloon are removed and sometimes a small metal tube, called a stent, is inserted to help keep the artery open. The aim of the procedure is to improve the blood flow and prevent amputations or death.

Is this procedure right for me?

You should be included in [making decisions about your care](#).

Your healthcare professionals should explain the risks and benefits of this procedure and how it is done. They should discuss your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should offer you more information about the procedure. Your family or carers can be involved if you want or need them to be.

You will be asked to decide whether you agree (consent) to have the procedure. Find out more about [giving consent to treatment on the NHS website](#).

Some questions to think about

- How many appointments will I need?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- Will I have to stay in hospital?
- What happens if it does not work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I do not want the procedure?
- Are other treatments available?

Information and support

The [NHS webpage on peripheral arterial disease](#) may be a good place to find out more.

You can [search the NHS website for information about consultants and hospitals](#) that offer this procedure.

- [NICE's information on interventional procedures guidance](#) explains what an interventional procedure is and how we assess it.
- [NICE's information on interventional procedures recommendations](#) explains what special arrangements are.

You can also get support from your local [Healthwatch](#).

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