

# Vascular screening, public talk Nov. 26

by Kathy Behnke

Peripheral artery disease (P.A.D.) is the abnormal narrowing or blockage of arteries, the vessels that deliver blood from the heart to the rest of the body. "If you have had a heart attack, angioplasty, stent, or bypass surgery, there's a 25 percent chance that this affects you," says Dr. David Lewis, a cardiovascular interventionalist for Wisconsin Heart and Vascular Institute who sees patients at Mile Bluff on a regular basis. Dr. Lewis will be in Mauston Monday, November 26 for free P.A.D. screenings, and to present a public talk entitled, "Vascular disease, take it to heart: The silent epidemic sweeping our nation." If you are concerned about your vascular health, be sure to attend the event.

There are several causes of P.A.D., but the most common is atherosclerosis, frequently called "hardening of the arteries." This is the same disease process that causes most heart attacks and strokes.

Peripheral artery disease often interferes with circulation of blood to the legs due to blocked arteries in the leg. When blood is restricted in the legs, oxygen supply to these muscles is limited as well. Muscles need oxygen to function properly and without an adequate blood supply, muscles may be painful and weak, especially during activity.

### Symptoms of P.A.D. may include:

- Leg, hip or buttock pain with walking (often stops with rest)
- Numbness, tingling, or weakness in the legs
- Burning or aching pain in the feet or toes when resting
- A sore on the leg or foot that won't heal
- Cold legs or feet
- A color change in the skin of the legs or feet
- Loss of hair on the legs



MILE BLUFF TIMES 6



Dr. David Lewis

### Who is at Risk for P.A.D.?

As many as ten million Americans may have P.A.D. Men are somewhat more likely than women to have the disease.

### Risk factors for P.A.D. include:

- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Obesity/being overweight
- High cholesterol
- Family history
- Lack of exercise
- Age greater than 65

### How is P.A.D. diagnosed?

"Poor circulation in the legs is much more important than you might think," says Dr. Lewis. "Early detection of vascular disease in the legs may reduce the risk of stroke and heart attack, as well as improve a person's ability to walk and be active."

Peripheral artery disease may be detected using a simple, painless test called the ankle-brachial index or ABI. This test involves taking blood pressures of the arms and legs and then comparing the ratios, which can give an early indication of blockage. If needed, additional testing can be performed using CT scanning, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), or ultrasound scanning to make a diagnosis - all of which are available on-site at Mile Bluff.

Let your cell phone speak for you in an emergency...

## ICE your cell phone - It could save your life

Help emergency responders and healthcare providers contact your loved ones with the touch of a few buttons. All you have to do is program your cell phone's telephone book with the code word ICE (In Case of Emergency).

The concept of ICE was developed by British paramedic, Bob Brotchie, after the London bombings. He saw how much valuable time - that could have been used to tend to the wounded - was wasted trying to contact family members of the injured. When working in an emergency situation, those few precious moments can mean the difference between life and death.

If you ICE your cell phone, healthcare workers are able to call your emergency contacts, find out who you are, and if you have any conditions or allergies that might affect treatment. All this can be done within a matter of moments, and you will receive the medical care that you are in need of in a more timely manner.

Be sure that you inform your ICE contacts that they may be called, and remind them of any health conditions, allergies and other information that might need to be shared in an emergency situation.

This simple initiative is gaining popularity across the world and has assisted many families in life-threatening situations. Mile Bluff Medi-

cal Center's Emergency Department encourages you to ICE your phone and to spread the word to your loved ones about ICE. Mile Bluff will be distributing bookmarks with this information to the school children of Juneau County. Watch for this information and help your kids program their phones. Working together, we might make a difficult time a little easier for everyone.



### It's as easy as 1-2-3-4...

1. Open up your mobile phone contacts
2. Create a new entry
3. Enter the contact name as ICE (you can add multiple contacts: ICE1, ICE2...)
4. Put in the contact's phone number (note that these may replace existing contacts)

### Treatment for P.A.D.

There is no cure for P.A.D., however, it can be treated with:

- Lifestyle changes
  - Smoking cessation
  - Exercise
  - Diet modification
  - Medications
- Prescription drugs
  - Circulation-enhancing drugs
  - Cholesterol lowering drugs
  - Anti-clot drugs
- Endovascular or surgical treatment
  - Angioplasty/stenting
  - Blockage removal (endarterectomy)
  - Bypass surgery

If you have concerns about your vascular health, talk to your primary healthcare provider. If you have symptoms of P.A.D. and would like to attend the free screening event at Hess Memorial Hospital on Monday, November 26, call the Health Promotion Department at 608-847-6161 x272 today.

Appointments are available from 1 to 3 and 4 to 6 p.m. Dr. Lewis will present his talk, "Vascular disease, take it to heart: The silent epidemic sweeping our nation" from 3 to 4 p.m. that day. Don't miss out on this opportunity!

