



MEN SHOULD GET VASCULAR SCREENINGS DURING MEN'S HEALTH MONTH

June is [National Men's Health Month](#), and men are strongly encouraged to pay special attention to their health during this month. While checkups should be done on a regular basis, this month is the perfect time to schedule appointments so that you can get a status check on your health.

IMPORTANCE OF VASCULAR SCREENINGS FOR YOUR BLOOD FLOW

A vascular screening is a check-up for your arteries and veins, also called your blood vessels. A screening can help you find out if you have vascular disease.

Not all vascular conditions have symptoms, so it's a good idea to make the time for a check-up to be sure that your blood vessels are healthy. Knowing if you have a health problem can help you treat it before a condition worsens. It's peace of mind!

Your vascular system (often called the circulatory system) is made up of vessels that carry your blood throughout your body, transporting vital oxygen and nutrients to your tissues and organs. Without healthy blood flow, your body can't function the way it should. Vascular disease is a group of conditions that affect the health of your arteries and veins and can lead to serious conditions like heart attack and stroke. Making sure your vascular system is in good condition is vitally important.

TYPES OF VASCULAR DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

There are three particularly important diagnostic ultrasound tests that can be performed to diagnose critical vascular issues. Ultrasound produces images of the body by using high-frequency sound waves, and these sound waves create echoes which are used to create both moving and still images. The images are displayed on a screen as the ultrasound is performed contributing to an effective diagnosis.

What Happens During a Vascular Ultrasound?

Healthy blood vessels are smooth, stretchy, and allow blood to flow through them easily. Vascular disease can cause weak spots in your blood vessels, or for them to become narrow or blocked.

During a vascular ultrasound, you will undergo a set of painless tests that check your blood vessels to judge if they are healthy, or if they have signs of disease. Vascular ultrasound tests are provided by specially trained technicians, also called vascular technologists, under the direction of MAVI vascular surgeons.

Abdominal ultrasound

An **abdominal ultrasound** checks for abdominal aortic aneurysm, a weak, bulging spot in the largest artery in your abdomen. During this test, you lie flat on your back and have images and measurements of your abdominal aorta taken through ultrasound. If left untreated, an aneurysm can burst, causing life-threatening internal bleeding.

Carotid artery ultrasound

A **carotid artery ultrasound** checks the arteries in your neck, which carry blood to your brain. During this test, you lay flat on your back and have images of your carotid arteries taken through ultrasound. This test also checks how quickly your blood flows through your carotid arteries to see if they are narrowed.

If left untreated, blocked carotid arteries can cause a stroke.

Ankle-brachial index (ABI)

An **ankle-brachial index (ABI)** test checks if you have signs of peripheral artery disease, or [PAD](#). During this test, your blood pressure is measured in both of your arms and both of your ankles, then compared. If your blood pressure is lower in your ankles than in your arms, you may have PAD, or blockages in the arteries in your limbs and pelvis. If left untreated, PAD can cause pain, difficulty walking, and serious damage that may lead to limb loss.

Why Do I Need a Screening?

A screening can help you find out if you have signs of vascular disease, and if you are at risk for having it in the future. Early diagnosis and treatment can help you avoid dangerous, life-threatening problems.

It is a good idea to have a screening if you:

- Are 60 or older
- Have diabetes
- Smoke
- Have high blood pressure
- Have a family history of cardiovascular disease or aortic aneurysm

If you've never had a vascular diagnostic test – or if you've ever experienced unexplained leg pain or cramps – be sure to talk with your primary care physician and request a referral to MAVI. Our capable and caring staff will make you comfortable.