

## LOWER EXTREMITY PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL TESTING

### ■ WHAT IS LOWER EXTREMITY PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL TESTING?

Lower Extremity Peripheral Arterial testing is testing that provides your doctor with information about the condition of the arteries in your legs. Testing is performed when your doctor suspects that your symptoms might be caused by plaque (fatty buildup) in these arteries.

### ■ WHAT HAPPENS DURING LOWER EXTREMITY PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL TESTING?

The test takes part in two or three stages:

- **Ankle brachial index (ABI)** – This test takes blood pressures on both your ankles and your arms. The test is comparing the pressures between the ankles and arms. An index is calculated using these measurements. An abnormal index may indicate blockage in an area of the artery in the leg. The ABI test is a simple and inexpensive test to diagnose blockage in the arteries.
- **Arterial imaging** – This test sends ultrasound waves through the legs to create an image that is evaluated by the cardiologist. This image can show blockage in an area of the leg.
- **Walking test** – The patient walks on a treadmill and then ABI's are done. Not all patients have the walking test done. It is generally used for patients who have a normal ABI and symptoms of pain in the legs while walking or exercising. These symptoms generally go away when exercise is stopped. The test takes 30 to 90 minutes to complete.



### ■ HOW DO I PREPARE FOR LOWER EXTREMITY PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL TESTING?

There is no special preparation for this test. You should wear two piece clothing with comfortable walking shoes.

### ■ WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE TEST?

After the test, you can go home and resume your normal activities. Your doctor will review your test and discuss the results with you at your next visit or his nurse will call you with the results.

### ■ WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND LIMITATIONS OF LOWER EXTREMITY PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL TESTING?

Lower extremity peripheral arterial testing typically does not carry any risk. Some patients walk on a treadmill as part of the test and this physical activity carries some risk to patients who have heart disease.