VASCULAR ADVANTAGE – THREE-PART SCREENING

WHAT IS VASCULAR ADVANTAGE?

Vascular Advantage is a three-part screening offered at Austin Heart to help assess your risk for stroke, an abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA), and peripheral vascular disease (PAD). These affordable preventative screenings are convenient, non-invasive, and painless.

SCREENING 1 - CAROTID ARTERY/STROKE SCREENING

The Carotid Artery or Stroke Screening is one of the best ways to screen for blockage or plaque build-up in the carotid arteries in the neck. The screening is safe, quick, and painless. We use Doppler ultrasound on the neck to screen for carotid artery disease caused by plaque build-up, which is the most common cause of a stroke. If a blockage in the carotid artery is found, it can be treated with diet, medications, intervention or surgery.

SCREENING 2 - PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE SCREENING

Plaque build-up in the legs can restrict blood flow and decrease circulation which can cause cramping, fatigue, and, in extreme cases, non-healing ulcers or amputation. Our Ankle Brachial Index (ABI) test screens for PAD by testing the blood pressure in the legs and comparing it to the blood pressure in the arms.

An abnormal ABI indicates that blockage is present in the legs and is often associated with a higher risk for heart disease. In addition, the American Diabetes Association now recommends ABI screening be performed on patients over 50 years who have diabetes, and in patients less than 50 years of age who have additional PAD risk factors.

When diagnosed, PAD can be treated with diet, exercise, medication, or in advanced cases, intervention or surgery.

SCREENING 3 - ABDOMINAL AORTA ANEURYSM SCREENING

An abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) is a bulging or ballooning at a weak point in the abdominal aorta. Just like stroke, many aneurysms show no symptoms prior to rupture. With the abdominal aorta functioning as the main blood supply for the abdomen and legs, a rupture can be fatal. Our abdominal ultrasound screening is an effective way to detect AAA. Again, this test involves using Doppler ultrasound to scan the abdomen in order for the aorta to be examined and measured. If caught early, these aneurysms can be repaired.
SHOULD I HAVE A VASCULAR ADVANTAGE SCREENING?

Heart disease, stroke and peripheral arterial disease (PAD) are all considered the same disease: cardiovascular disease. Stroke is the third most common cause of death after heart attacks and cancer and also the leading cause of disability. Unfortunately, many strokes and aneurysms occur without any warning signs. The risk factors for stroke, abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA), and PAD include:

- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Coronary artery disease
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Family history of stroke or vascular disease
- Age - over 50

If you have two or more of these risk factors, you should strongly consider a Vascular Advantage screening.

HOW DO I SCHEDULE A SCREENING?

The Vascular Advantage screening can be scheduled at any one of twelve Austin Heart locations in Central Texas. Call 800-803-6960 to schedule a screening at an office location near you.

Insurance and Medicare do not typically cover screening programs. Diagnostic studies are usually only covered if the patient is experiencing specific symptoms. Since many strokes and aneurysms occur without any symptoms at all, the chance to prevent a life-threatening condition is often lost. Austin Heart offers the Vascular Advantage screening at an affordable price to allow you to be proactive in taking control of your health.