

Have you been told that you need to have a toe, foot or leg amputated because you have a foot ulcer that isn't healing? Or maybe your loved one is facing this difficult situation. What should you do?

*Ask your doctor three questions* to learn if blood flow can be returned to the affected area, heal the wound and save your limb.

**1** *Have you taken pictures of the inside of my veins and arteries?*  
Your doctor should say, “**yes.**” Ask your doctor to explain where the leg is blocked with plaque and how it is slowing your blood flow. If your doctor says “no,” tell him you want an imaging test **immediately**, or see another doctor.

**2** *Can I avoid amputation by having another procedure?*  
If your doctor says “**yes.**” There are **two** procedures that could restore blood flow.

### Endovascular Treatment

Tiny incisions are made in your leg instead of one large opening. Your doctor then threads a small hollow tube through a blood vessel to the blocked artery in your leg and removes or clears the plaque to restore blood flow.

### Bypass Surgery

Your doctor may bypass your blocked or narrowed blood vessel with a vein from another part of your body or a man-made blood vessel.

If your doctor says “**no.**” This may be because some doctors believe an amputation is the most effective treatment for severely blocked arteries. The patient receives an artificial leg and is able to walk again. Or he or she may say, “no,” because an infection is very severe and spreading.

If your doctor wants to amputate, tell him or her that you want a second opinion from a vascular surgeon **immediately**. Saving a limb can be complicated but is possible.

**3** *How do I know if you're the right doctor for me?*  
You will want to determine if the doctor performing the procedure is the right doctor for you. Your doctor should be a board-certified vascular surgeon with fellowship training in peripheral artery disease. Ask how long they have practiced and how their approach is the same as or different than other surgeons. **You want to feel confident that your doctor will do everything he or she can to save your limb before recommending amputation.** If you do not feel confident, seek another one in your area or nearby city.

# Why Amputation?



**Today, 200 Americans will have a toe, foot or leg amputated because of smoking or diabetes.**

Too often, vascular surgeons first see a patient at the point when he or she has such severe non-healing ulcers from peripheral artery disease that amputation is the only treatment option.

The number of amputations performed annually in the United States is estimated to be 160,000 to 180,000, and more than 50% of these patients had no diagnostic ortherapeutic endovascular intervention.

**Leg UP believes there is no excuse for someone to lose a limb.**

If you have foot ulcers that are failing to heal, or pain in your calves or legs when you walk, you need to see a vascular surgeon **immediately**.

## About Us

**Leg UP** is not your typical disease awareness program.

We will not tell you what you already know. Rather we're going to tell you what you need to know but don't, giving you an advantage, or "leg up" at your next medical appointment.

**Leg UP** began in 2016 when **Dr. Hardeep S. Ahluwalia**, founder of the **California Vein and Vascular Centers**, recognized that patients with diabetic foot ulcers were uninformed of alternatives to amputation.

Dr. Ahluwalia aims to eventually reach all with peripheral artery disease patients in and outside of the United States through social media, community events and partnerships with advocacy, professional and business organizations. You can learn more about Leg UP at [cvvcenters.com/legup](http://cvvcenters.com/legup). Leg UP gratefully accepts educational grants and soon will be registered as a 501(c) 3 organization.



Normal Artery



Atherosclerotic Artery

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 CALIFORNIA  
Vein & Vascular Centers