

## Peripheral Arterial Disease – The Basics

### Intermittent Claudication (Browse 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed, pp 165)

#### *History*

Basic details: Name, age (usually > 50), sex (M>F: 10:1), ethnic group, occupation, marital status, address, date of examination.

#### Presenting Complaint + History of Presenting Complaint

“Pain in the legs when I exercise”. Ask all the questions relating to pain → SOCRATES!

Intermittent Claudication is only diagnosed if these criteria are filled:

1. Pain in muscle – “cramp like” (e.g.: calf, thigh, buttocks, upper limbs etc)
2. Pain only develops during muscle exercise.
3. Pain disappears when exercise stops.

In “associated symptoms” section, ask the following (i.e.: if you suspect intermittent claudication)

1. Do you feel numb or have pins & needles in your leg at time of pain?
2. How far can you walk before muscle pain begins? (i.e.: claudication distance)
3. How long do you have to rest before muscle pain completely disappears?
4. Do you suffer from impotence? (i.e.: stenosis at bifurcation of aorta can cause decreased blood supply to the penis)

#### Past Medical History

Specifically ask the following:

1. Risk factors for arterial disease (i.e.: HAMACHD)
2. Similar experiences in the past, or heart attacks, CVAs, AAAs.
3. Surgeries, other illnesses

#### Systematic Review

Focus particularly on CVS questions. Ask specifically:

1. Chest pain, fainting, weakness, paraesthesiae, blurred or loss of vision (i.e.: tunnel vision)

#### Family History

Ask specifically for similar problems in the family. Ask specifically about any Cardiovascular or CVA in the family.

*Perform the PVD examination, paying particular attention to inspection (pallor), palpation (weakened/absent pulse immediately above group of muscles affected), auscultation (bruits).*

## **Rest Pain (Browse 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed, pp 167)**

### *History*

Basic details: Name, age (usually > 60), sex (M>F), ethnic group, occupation, marital status, address, date of examination.

### Presenting Complaint + History of Presenting Complaint

“I have continuous, severe, aching pain and it causes me not to sleep properly, and I cant walk much at all”. Ask all the questions relating to pain → SOCRATES!

Watch for the following points:

- Is the patient having their leg in a position below their heart? (i.e.: increase blood supply due to effect of gravity). Is the patient sleeping with knee bent?

### Past Medical History

Ask all things as for intermittent claudication. Specifically ask for previous history of intermittent claudication.

### Systematic Review

Ask all the things as for intermittent claudication.

### Family History

Ask all the things as for intermittent claudication.

*Perform the PVD examination, paying particular attention to inspection (pallor, ulcers), palpation (decrease in temperature, pulse may not be affected at all), auscultation (bruits).*