

Circulatory System Problems and Remedies

The **human circulatory system** is a wonderful thing.

The **function of the circulatory system** is to carry oxygen filled blood and nutrients through the body; feeding each individual cell and picking up waste materials like carbon dioxide which it drops off in the lungs to be expelled from the body as we breathe.

Here are a few facts concerning the **heart and circulatory system**:

- The body of an adult contains over 60,000 miles of blood vessels!
- An adult's heart pumps nearly 4000 gallons of blood each day!
- Your heart beats some 30 million times a year!
- The average three-year-old has two pints of blood in their body; the average adult at least five times more!
- A "heartbeat" is really the sound of the valves in the heart closing as they push blood through its chambers.

The **heart and circulatory system** is probably the most important, and the least appreciated part of the human anatomy.

Those afflicted with **circulatory system disease** suffer from many problems that are sometimes attributed to other areas.

Poor leg circulation – restricted blood flow to the legs – is most commonly caused by Peripheral Vascular Disease, or PVD.

These are disorders involving blood vessels on the outside of the heart.

PVD can involve peripheral arteries (blood vessels that carry blood away from the heart) or peripheral veins (blood vessels that carry blood toward the heart) and later result in poor **circulation**.

When PVD involves the arteries, it is known as **Peripheral Artery Disease**, or PAD.

A fatty substance called plaque builds up and hardens on the walls of the peripheral arteries, making it difficult for blood to properly flow through and thus causing poor **circulation**.

The plaque takes years to build up, which is why older adults are more at risk for poor **circulation**.

If you are one of the millions of people plagued with **poor leg circulation** or **poor circulation of the feet**, then you will gain great value from this report.

When the lower body, namely the legs and feet don't get enough blood flow, serious problems can occur.

Some of the **symptoms of poor circulation** are:

- Cramping or fatigue in the legs, buttocks or feet during activity. It will usually go away with rest, but will come back as soon as you resume your activity.
- Cramping or pain in your legs while sitting for long periods of time; such as driving long distances, or while on a long flight or bus ride.
- Your legs and/or feet "fall asleep" while sitting or sleeping.
- Tired, aching feet, or swelling of the feet and legs.
- Lower temperature in the legs and feet compared with the rest of the body. (This can also apply to the arms and hands)

Some of the complications that can come about as a result of poor **circulation** if left untreated include heart attack, stroke, amputation and death.

According to Douglas J. Wirthlin M.D., a Board Certified vascular surgeon, 8 to 12 million Americans suffer from **Peripheral Artery Disease**, or poor **circulation**.

Of the factors that put you at greater risk, some can't be controlled such as; age, or family history.

There are risk factors however, that can be controlled. These include, but are not limited to:

- Smoking: Smokers are generally diagnosed with poor **circulation** about 10 years earlier than non-smokers.
- Inactivity: Physical inactivity increases not only your risk of heart attack and stroke, but also your risk of poor **circulation**. Exercise is usually prescribed as a treatment for poor **circulation**.
- Obesity: Obesity can not only lead to high blood pressure, but also to high cholesterol and diabetes, which can cause poor **circulation**.

According to Dr. Wirthlin, if you are living with any of these risk factors and are over the age of 50, you should see your doctor for an examination even if you are not suffering any of the symptoms.

The biggest effect that can come about as a result of poor **circulation** in the legs and feet is that sores and injuries don't heal as fast as they used to, and in some cases, won't heal at all without special care.

The reason for this is the blood carries oxygen and other vital elements the body tissues need for healing and vitality.

Take Cellulitis, for example.

Cellulitis is a spreading bacterial infection of the skin and tissues just below the skin caused by Streptococcus and Staphylococcus bacteria. It can surface as a result of a cut or sore on the feet or legs, but can also occur on healthy tissue.

Cellulitis can take more than 10 days to heal with good, healthy tissue. In the presence of poor **circulation**, it might take weeks, even with special care.

Without good **circulation** carrying blood and nutrients to the lower extremities, healing time is greatly extended.

Some other complications **poor leg circulation** can cause are gangrene that can lead to amputation of a foot or leg, or a blood clot also known as Deep Vein Thrombosis.

The effects of gangrene and amputation are obvious, but DVT, or blood clots can also lead to serious illness and death.

If a blood clot dislodges from the vein, pieces of it can travel through the circulatory system and reach the heart where it can clog the valves of the heart and cause a heart attack.

Other problems from poor **circulation** include not getting a good night's sleep.

People with poor **circulation** often wake up in the middle of the night with severe cramps and aching of the legs and/or feet because of oxygen deprivation to the lower extremities.

This leads to improper rest which further aggravates the problem.

Poor circulation in a foot or leg can cause falls when you have been sitting for long periods of time and the feet or legs 'go to sleep'.

When you get up, you can't maintain your balance because you don't have proper strength in your lower extremities.

This in turn can lead to broken bones and severe bruises which can take extra time to heal because of decreased **circulation**.

As you can see, your **circulatory system** plays a major part of your general health and well being.

Without proper **circulation**, nerve damage can also occur. If the nerves in the feet get damaged, cuts and injuries to the feet may not be felt. This can lead to other complications.

Since healing from skin breakdowns, cuts and bruises to the feet is retarded due to poor **circulation**, special care is needed.

Here are some things you need to do if you suffer from **poor circulation in your feet**.

- Prevent trauma and accidents (e.g. wear shoes to prevent trauma)
- Wear footwear that is well fitted and will not cause any pressure areas.
- Seek professional help with the cutting of toenails. (any accidents here from self help may prove to be costly)

- Seek treatment for corns and calluses. (If left untreated, the skin may break down and sores may develop underneath them and be difficult to heal).
- Try not to sit for long periods of time without moving. Try to get up and move around or stretch your legs to aid circulation. If you must sit for long periods, try to get your feet elevated if you can. This makes the blood easier to pump through the arteries and veins, especially in the lower extremities.

To repeat once again, If you think you have poor circulation, see your doctor, because poor circulation can be quite serious and an indication of another medical problem.

Some Common Treatments For Poor Circulation

In the past, common treatments for poor circulation have included surgery, as well as certain drugs that dilate the blood vessels.

The use of these dilating drugs is decreasing now in favor of ‘viscosity reducing’ drugs that make the blood less thick and sticky and help it flow better.

In more severe cases, surgery may be the only option when an artery is clogged to the point of closure.

Sometimes in the case of varicose veins, (which happen when the valves in the veins become weak or break, allowing blood to collect in the veins instead of being carried up to the heart), a chemical is injected into the vein.

This procedure, called sclerotherapy, closes off the affected vein, forcing other stronger veins to take over the job of carrying the blood back to the heart.

Angioplasty is a medical procedure in which a balloon is used to open narrowed or blocked blood vessels of the heart (coronary arteries). It is not considered to be a type of surgery.

After the angioplasty procedure, a 'Stent' is placed in the artery to hold it open.

A Stent is a wire mesh tube that is usually inserted in its collapsed state and expanded with the aid of a balloon that is inflated when the stent is in place.

Then, the balloon is removed leaving the stent inside the artery.

A stent may be used instead of -- or along with -- angioplasty.

The use of stents depends on certain features of the artery blockage including the size of the artery and the type of blockage.

Stenting is such a common procedure; it represents 70-90 percent of procedures now.

Stents help reduce the renarrowing that occurs after angioplasty or other procedures that use catheters.

Stents also help restore normal blood flow and keep an artery open if it's been torn or injured by the balloon catheter.

Some other traditional treatments include:

- resting with the legs elevated (with the feet raised above the hips)
- wearing properly-fitting elasticized compression stockings
- losing weight, if obesity is considered to be making the problem worse

Natural Treatments for Poor Circulation

Going back some 5000 years, there have been natural remedies that do the same thing as a lot of chemical and surgical treatments do.

The ancient Chinese had many uses for the plants and herbs that grew wild in the lands, and their knowledge has made its way gradually to the Western world in the last century.

Other cultures have also contributed to the knowledge base of natural medicines including the Native Americans who first made use of the herbs and plants right here in the US.

Here is a list of some of the natural remedies that have been proven to assist in the prevention or cure of circulatory problems.

Ginkgo Biloba

The first on the list is **Ginkgo Biloba**, used over 5000 years ago by the Chinese to treat circulation as well as respiratory ailments.

It is one of the world's longest living species of tree and today is one of the most popular herbal remedies for poor **circulation**.

Ginkgo Biloba has been proven by medical studies to increase **circulation** to the arms, legs and feet by thinning the blood and reducing clotting. The blood can then flow freely through the **circulatory system** and keep the extremities warm.

Due to the strength of **Ginkgo Biloba**, it is not recommended to be used along with other medicines that are intended for increasing circulation.

Cayenne

Next on the list is **Cayenne**, or Red Pepper. The following paragraphs are copied directly from <http://www.shirleys-wellness-cafe/cayenne.htm> .

“Many herbalists believe that **Cayenne** is the most useful and valuable herb in the herb kingdom, not only for the entire digestive system, but also for the **heart and circulatory system**. It acts as a catalyst and increases the effectiveness of other herbs when used with them.

Cayenne is a medicinal and nutritional herb.

It is a very high source of Vitamins A & C, has the complete B complexes, and is very rich in organic calcium and potassium, which is one of the reasons it is good for the heart”.

Cayenne has been known to stop heart attacks within 30 seconds.

For example, when a 90-year-old man in Oregon had a severe heart attack, his daughter was able to get **Cayenne** extract into his mouth.

He was pronounced dead by the medics, but within a few minutes, he regained consciousness.

On the way to the hospital, he remained in a semi-conscious state, but the daughter kept giving him the **Cayenne** extract.

By the time they got to the hospital, he had fully recovered and wanted to go home and mow the lawn.

The doctor asked what she had given him, as he said it was the closest thing to a miracle he had ever seen.

If a heart attack should occur, it is suggested that a teaspoon of extract be given every 15 minutes or a teaspoon of **Cayenne** in a glass of hot water be taken until the crisis has passed.

Dr. Richard Anderson also knew of a doctor who rushed out into the parking lot and put cayenne tincture into the mouth of a man who had died of a heart attack while he was parking his car.

Within a few minutes, the man’s heart starting beating again.

According to Dr. Anderson, using **cayenne** and **hawthorn berries** together has a most incredible effect upon the heart.

He believes that a regimen of **cayenne** and **hawthorn berries** for several months will greatly strengthen the heart, and possibly prevent heart attacks.

He states further that if an attack were to occur in someone who had followed this regimen, chances are very good that no damage would occur.

He tells the following story about his mother:

“I had her taking **hawthorn berries** and **cayenne** when she had a heart attack at the age of 79.

Her diet had not been the best, and she was in an extremely stressful situation.

While in the hospital, they found three blocked arteries and wanted to operate immediately.

They did not think that she could survive for more than a few weeks if they didn't operate. (How many have heard that story!)

The doctors thought it would be very risky to operate, but they had her there, and there was a lot of money to be made, so they decided to take some tests in the hopes that they could find an excuse to operate.

In spite of the fact that she had been taking lots of aspirin for her arthritis, smoked like she was the reincarnation of a boiler factory, and had just had a heart attack, they found that her heart was incredibly strong.

In fact, they felt that her heart was stronger than most people in their 30's!

The good news was that not only did she survive the operation, but also she stopped smoking!

Well worth the operation, don't you think?

In my opinion, that was the best thing the doctors ever did for her.

Well, that is what **hawthorn** and **cayenne** can do for the heart, and every good herbalist knows it; every good doctor should also know it, but very few do.”

For much more information concerning **Cayenne** or Capsicum, visit Shirley's site: <http://www.shirleys-wellness-cafe/cayenne.htm>

Garlic

Let's look at **Garlic**, now.

Garlic is an excellent long-term remedy for circulatory problems, helping to keep the arteries clear and strong and the blood pressure healthily low.

It reduces the risk of circulatory problems in people with diabetes, and protects the heart.

Garlic has many uses, Antiseptic, antiviral, fungicidal, antispasmodic, expectorant, anti-allergic, lowers blood pressure, lowers blood sugar and cholesterol and as a circulatory stimulant.

Healthy and vampire-safe too!

Garlic has long-figured in a seemingly endless array of folk remedies for everything from insect bites to fever to intestinal ailments and even as a vampire repellent.

The ancient Greeks, Chinese, and others used **Garlic** to treat parasites, respiratory problems, and other conditions.

Numerous studies indicate that **Garlic** can also help to prevent cancer, boost immunity, balance blood sugar levels, and prevent digestive ailments.

Hawthorn or Hawthorn Berry

Reputed to be the best all around tonic herb for heart and cardiovascular health is **Hawthorn** or **Hawthorn Berry**.

For a detailed explanation and profile of the **Hawthorn** and its medicinal qualities, see <http://www.kcweb.com/herb/hawthorn.htm> .

The **Hawthorn** is called both a tree and a shrub with more than 1000 species worldwide.

Go to this site: <http://www.hawthornsyrup.com/abouthawthorn.html> to read more about this amazing plant.

The effects from **Hawthorn** are not as immediate as **Cayenne**, but are more of a long-term maintenance remedy from what I read.

A combination of **Hawthorn**, **Cayenne**, **Garlic**, and **Ginkgo Biloba** is considered by some herbalists to be the ultimate treatment for any circulatory system complaint.

Bilberry (Huckleberry in the US)

Another berry fruit used in the natural treatment of circulatory problems is the **Bilberry**; a British version of the Blueberry.

In North America, it's known as the Huckleberry and grows wild in damp woody areas. On a rare occasion it will be found in a field but it will still be close to a forest.

Here is a website that offers detailed information on the **Bilberry**:

<http://www.kcweb.com/herb/bilberry.htm>

Bilberry is also known as a remedy for poor vision and “night blindness”. In World War II, British pilots would eat **Bilberry** preserves before night missions to aid night vision.

Clinical tests have shown that **Bilberry** taken orally can improve eye diseases such as myopia, pigmentosa, retinitis and glaucoma.

Gotu Kola

Another natural herb used in the treatment of poor **circulation** is **Gotu Kola**.

This plant grows in a widespread distribution in tropical, swampy areas, including parts of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, and South Africa.

Gotu Kola was first used in India where it was part of Ayurvedic medicine, and was popular as a nerve tonic to promote relaxation and enhance memory.

Scientists have since discovered that **Gotu Kola** also helps ensure a healthy blood supply to your skin, which helps stimulate the natural repair and rejuvenation process

Gotu Kola has a positive effect on **circulation**, improving the flow of blood throughout the body and strengthening the veins and capillaries.

Gotu Kola may also be used to support the heart, and promote healthy liver and kidney functions. **Gotu Kola** is also used to strengthen the vascular system, to strengthen connective tissue, and to treat vascular inflammation.

Apple cider vinegar combined with **Gotu Kola** helps with arthritis, and is great for your skin and helps with **peripheral artery disease**, and strengthening the arteries.

Varicose veins, thread veins & skin lesions improve because of the way the apple cider vinegar and **Gotu Kola** are able to support the rebuilding of collagen and tissues.

Gotu kola has been shown to be particularly useful for people who are inactive or confined to bed due to illness.

For more information on this miraculous plant, see this site:

<http://www.kcweb.com/herb/gotu.htm>

Gotu Kola has even been shown to work as a treatment for A.D.D. in children because of the stimulating effect on the brain that increases the ability to focus while soothing and relaxing the nervous system.

It has been called “The Miracle Elixir of Life” because an ancient Chinese herbalist reputedly lived over 200 years as a result of regular doses of Gotu Kola.

Another excellent site to get more information can be found at:

<http://www.healthandage.com/html/res/com/ConsHerbs/GotuKolach.html>

MotherWort (*Leonurus cardiaca*)

Motherwort came from central Eurasia originally, but has spread to all temperate areas of the world, primarily as a garden plant but also as a weed.

A similar plant, *Leonurus heterophyllus*, is used in China.

The Chinese name for motherwort is yi mu cao, meaning “benefit mother herb.”

The leaves and flowers of this mint family plant are used as medicine. In Chinese herbal medicine, the seeds are also employed.

‘ Motherwort’ shows its relevance to menstrual and uterine conditions while ‘*cardiaca*’ indicates its use in **heart and circulatory system** treatments.

It is considered to be a prime treatment in cases of **tachycardia** (heart palpitations), especially when brought about by anxiety and other such

causes. It may be used in all heart conditions that are associated with anxiety and tension.

Germany' s Commission E has authorized Motherwort for the treatment of heart disorders caused by anxiety and stress, as well as part of an overall treatment plan for an overactive thyroid.

These two uses are linked by the fact that both stress and high levels of thyroid hormone can increase the heart rate.

Motherwort is an excellent heart tonic, and research has shown that it is able to calm palpitations, and irregular heartbeats. It strengthens without straining the **heart and circulatory system** and greatly lessens the effects of **peripheral artery disease**.

Motherwort may also be freely combined in any prescription especially with Hawthorn.

Information taken from this website:

<http://www.drugdigest.org/DD/DVH/HerbsWho/0,3923,4127%7CMotherwort,00.html>

Other Natural Herb Remedies

Here are some other natural remedies you might want to take a look at to aid in **peripheral artery disease**.

Ginger, skullcap and valerian root will help to dilate the blood vessels and **improve blood circulation**.

Also, calcium and magnesium supplements will reduce clotting. **Butcher's Broom** joins **Garlic** and **Cayenne** as a blood thinner to aid **circulation**.

There are numerous natural herbs and plants that will work to improve heart and circulatory ailments as well as lower cholesterol and generally **improve blood circulation**.

This website has a fairly extensive range of questions and answers to many heart and circulatory problems:

http://www.herbnet.com/ask%20the%20herbalist/asktheherbalist_questions%20on%20heart%20and%20circulation.htm

If you would like to do further research on the subject of herbal treatments, go to Google and type in 'herb treatments for bad **circulation**' without the quotes, or, 'herb treatments to **improve blood circulation**'.

This will return thousands of results for you to find whatever you need.

Here are a couple more remedies to **improve blood circulation**:

Circulation Bath

Good for all kinds of **circulation** problems including acne. Can be used in a footbath for fever, feet problems, rheumatism and muscular pain.

Make a decoction of 2 gr. Birch leaves, 2 gr Rosemary, 2 gr Thyme. Boil them for 10-20 mins., Strain and use 70 ml in the foam bath emulsifier. Add Essential oils of Rosemary (15 drops), Siberian Fir (15 drops) Lavender (10 drops)

Tea Tree Bath

5-10 drops Tea Tree oil in a hand bowl of water.

Treatment to **improve blood circulation**: Take a **circulation** bath every second night and alternate with a soda bath. You can also alternate between a garlic bath and a yarrow/garlic bath.

You can find more of these baths and remedies at this site:

<http://www.aromantic.co.uk/frameset.asp?http%3A//www.aromantic.co.uk/articles/bath-treatments.htm>

As you can see, there are just so many herbal remedies and treatments it would be almost impossible to list them all here. However, search engines like Google and Yahoo will bring all this right to your computer.

Make use of the resources you have available and you can have a healthier, more vital life than you ever imagined.

Appliance and Prosthetic Remedies

To end this report, here are some mechanical appliances that you can use to **improve blood circulation** and increase blood flow to the legs and feet.

There are leg wedges; foam wedges you can place in the bed to elevate the legs while you sleep. This will **improve blood circulation** to the legs and

feet. It will also serve to remove some of the strain from your lower back, allowing a good nights sleep.

You can also buy special beds such as ‘Sleep Comfort’ from Select Comfort, that you can adjust to elevate the head or the legs.

While this may be a considerably more expensive investment, it may be the answer for older people especially who have trouble with **circulation** in general.

Another bed that looks promising, at least on the website is the Lattoflex Winx system.

Here’s a quote from the site:

‘The Winx bed system reacts sensibly to the natural movements during sleep and returns this kinetic energy softly to the body – unlike other frames; for example, wooden-slatted frames or gel or water beds which really absorb this kinetic energy.

The recreative effect of the support active spring system by Winx improves the blood circulation and the loosening of the muscles measurably and helps in that way to avoid tensions – the premise for a pleasant lying feeling.’

Take a look at the bed at the site:

<http://www.lattoflex.com/winx-principle.htm>

Another specialty bed available is the ‘Sleep Number’ bed from Select Comfort.

This air-adjustable bed gives with your body weight to relieve ‘pressure-points’ that can cause poor **circulation** while you sleep. If you’ve ever woke up with your arm tingling because it ‘went to sleep’ you can appreciate this feature.

Anything that helps you rest better is going to improve your **circulation** and general well-being.

Look at the ‘Sleep Number’ bed ‘frequently asked questions’ at this link:

<http://www.selectcomfort.com/articles/faqindex.cfm?cmref=homeside>

A more traditional 'Hospital Bed' can be found here:

<http://www.rehabmart.com/product/375.htm>

And Here:

www.AllegroMedical.com

If you go to Google and type in "orthopedic bed" without the quotes, you will find several different brands and styles of beds, as well as other appliances designed to assist in getting a good rest and improve blood **circulation**.

I hope you have enjoyed reading this report, and I hope you have gained some valuable information.

Poor circulation is nothing to play around with, as it can lead to other, even more serious complications.

This report is not intended as medical advice. It is purely to inform and educate you in the other alternatives you might have available to you. As in any medical situation, always consult your family doctor before you stop taking any medications he may have prescribed for you.

At the end of this report, you will find several web sites where you can find more information or verify what is written here.

Thank you for reading, and good health to you.

Michael Fortomas

<http://1source-body-health.com>

Information Sources

<http://healthhighlights.ihc.com/article.asp?page=95>
<http://www.epodiatry.com/poor-circulation.htm>
<http://www.merck.com/mmhe/sec18/ch211/ch211b.html>
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