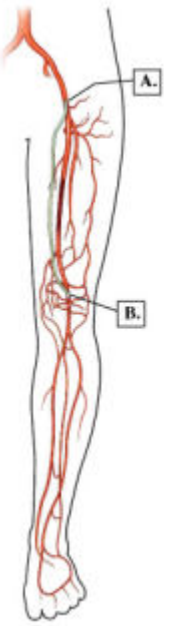
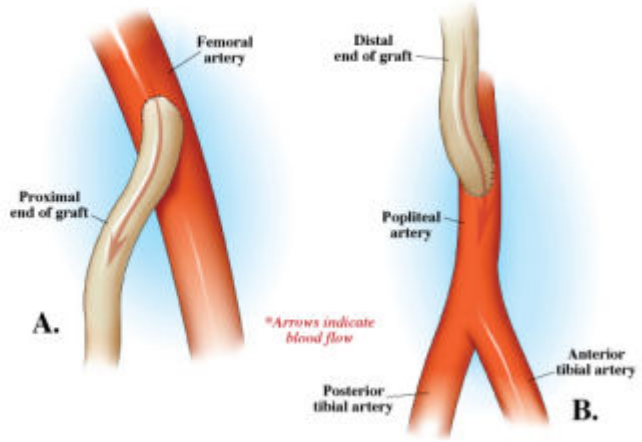
Femoral Popliteal Bypass
Care After Surgery

A femoral popliteal bypass surgery is a surgery to go around (*bypass*) a blocked artery in the leg by using a blood vessel or a graft. Arteries are very important. They carry oxygen and nutrients to the body. The femoral artery is in the upper part of the leg (*thigh*). It is the main artery that carries blood to the leg. Popliteal arteries are in the back of the knee. These arteries take blood to the lower part of the leg.





AFTER SURGERY

- You will stay in a recovery area until the anesthesia has worn off. Your blood pressure and pulse will be checked. After the recovery room, you may be taken to the intensive care unit (ICU).
- You will be given pain medicine to keep you comfortable.
- You may have ice packs over the surgical area. This can help reduce swelling and pain.
- Your surgical site will be checked often after your surgery. This is to make sure you have good blood flow in your leg.
  - Caregivers will feel for a heartbeat (*pulse*) on your foot. Your leg will also be checked for changes in color, temperature or for decreased sensation.
- To prevent blood clots in your legs, you will begin activity a few hours after your surgery.
- You may stay in the ICU for less than a day. From there, you will go to a regular hospital room.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

When you return home, it is important to follow all your caregiver's instructions:

- Take medications as told by your caregiver.
- Incision site care:
  - Clean your incision site as told by your caregiver.
  - Keep the area around your incision dry unless told by your caregiver. Ask your caregiver when it is okay to shower. Do not take a bath until your incision has completely healed.
  - Keep the area around the incision clean. This will help decrease your risk of infection. Check your incision site every day. Let your caregiver know if you see any swelling, redness or anything leaking from the incision.
- Activity, follow your caregiver's advice. In general:
  - Exercise as told by your caregiver.
  - Avoid strenuous physical activity for the first few weeks. This is anything that requires great effort or energy.
  - Raise (*elevate*) your legs when sitting.
  - Ask your caregiver when you can return to work. The type of work you do will make a difference.
- Ask your caregiver when it is safe to start driving.
- Keep all your follow-up appointments.

PROGNOSIS

- Atherosclerosis is not always cured by a femoral popliteal bypass. Other arteries could become blocked. Because of this, people who make lifestyle changes and are treated for atherosclerosis have the best results. For long-term success:
  - Control your blood pressure.
  - Take prescription medication as told by your caregiver.
  - Manage diabetes, if you have it.
  - Do not smoke.
  - Eat healthy foods. Ask your caregiver for suggestions, or talk with a dietitian.
  - Get regular exercise. Talk with your caregiver before starting any new physical activity.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have redness and swelling around your incision site.
- You continue to have pain in your leg, even after taking pain medication.
- You have any questions about your medications.
- You have nausea or vomiting.
- You have abnormal bowel habits such as having a difficult time having a bowel movement (*constipation*) or having loose stools (*diarrhea*).
- You develop a fever of more than 100.5°F (38.1° C).
- You feel weak and tired.
- You are too tired to walk every day.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your leg becomes pale, cold, blue, tingly, or has no feeling.
- You have yellow or tan fluid coming from your incision site.
- You have bleeding from the incision site.
- You have severe pain in your leg that does not go away, even after you have taken pain medicine.
- You have trouble breathing.
- You have chest pain.
- You develop a fever of more than 102°F (38.9° C).

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