

I22 Circulator Boot

June 2, 2008

Intro: Many people with diabetes are at risk of developing wounds on their feet that just won't heal. They're also at risk of getting hardened arteries in their legs, a condition that can be very painful. These issues are what cause some diabetics and some people with peripheral arterial disease to need amputations. But doctors at Mayo Clinic are using a special boot to help prevent amputations and save limbs.

Video

Total running time 1:23

CG :21 to :25

John Bergman

Uses circulator boot

Audio

IT'S CALLED A CIRCULATOR BOOT.

JOHN BERGMAN WEARS IT FIVE MORNINGS A WEEK.

"IT FEELS GOOD. ALMOST LIKE A MASSAGE."

JOHN HAS POOR BLOOD SUPPLY IN HIS LEGS. AND BECAUSE OF THAT, A WOUND DEVELOPED THAT JUST WOULDN'T HEAL. IT STARTED SMALL, BUT WITHOUT ENOUGH NUTRIENT-RICH BLOOD FLOWING TO IT, THE WOUND GOT WORSE.

"AT ONE POINT IT WAS ABOUT 13 INCHES LONG AND 9 INCHES ACROSS."

CG :28 to :38
Vivien Williams
Reporting

“BLOOD SUPPLY IS THE MOST
IMPORTANT THING FOR WOUND
HEALING.”

DR. KAREN ANDREWS SAYS IF
WOUNDS CAN'T HEAL, THEY CAN
GET INFECTED, AND THIS
PROCESS COULD EVENTUALLY
LEAD TO THE NEED FOR
AMPUTATION. BUT THE
CIRCULATOR BOOT IS HELPING TO
SAVE LIMBS.

CG :38 to :44
Karen Andrews, M.D.
Mayo Clinic physician

“WE STUDIED IT AND FOUND THAT
WE WERE GETTING GOOD
RESULTS WITH IT. WE WERE
SAVING LIMBS WE WERE HEALING
WOUNDS THAT HAD BEEN
PRESENT FOR MONTHS.”

Animation

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS: EVERY
TIME YOUR HEART RESTS
BETWEEN BEATS, THE
CIRCULATOR BOOT FILLS WITH AIR
AND COMPRESSES THE LEG. THIS
SENDS NUTRIENT-RICH BLOOD

THROUGH THE ARTERIES TOWARD
THE FOOT, HELPING WOUNDS
HEAL. THE COMPRESSIONS ALSO
PUSH BLOOD THROUGH CLOGGED
ARTERIES AND HELP FORM NEW
PATHWAYS FOR BLOOD TO
CIRCULATE. THEN IT BRINGS
BLOOD BACK TO THE HEART TO BE
OXYGENATED AGAIN. IT'S
WORKING FOR JOHN.
“TODAY THE WOUND IS DOWN TO
WHERE IT'S ABOUT LIKE AN EGG.
ABOUT THAT BIG.”
AND JOHN IS ABLE TO WALK
THROUGH LIFE KNOWING HIS LEG
IS HEALING. FOR MEDICAL EDGE,
I'M VIVIEN WILLIAMS.

Anchor tag:

Dr. Andrews says the circulator boot may not be right for everyone. People with blood clots in their legs or people with certain levels of heart failure should not use it. But for many people, the circulator boot may help avoid an amputation.

Dr. Andrews also wants to let people know that if a leg cannot be saved, people can do very well with amputations. Surgeries are state-of-the-art, as is the development of prosthetic devices.

Keep in mind that not all types of leg compression devices are designed for these problems, and some can make things worse. So before you start any compression therapy, talk to a doctor.

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