

detect ischaemia to the lower extremities is palpation of the foot pulses (posterior tibial and dorsalis pedis arteries) in both feet. Note whether pulses are present or absent. If pulses in the foot can be clearly felt, the risk of foot ulceration due to vascular disease is small.

Test capillary return: A helpful confirmation sign of arterial insufficiency is pallor of the involved feet after 1 - 2 min of elevation if venous filling time is delayed beyond the normal limit of 15 sec.

Doppler probe: If pulses cannot be palpated, apply a small hand-held Doppler, placed over the dorsalis pedis or posterior tibial arteries to detect pulses, quantify the vascular supply and listen to the quality of the signal.

When the foot pulses are very weak or not palpable, the risk assessment could be completed by measuring the ankle brachial index (ankle pressure/ brachial pressure). Normal ankle brachial index is 0.9 - 1.2. An ankle brachial index less than 0.6 indicates compromised peripheral circulation.

Related metadata: relates to the data element Foot deformity version 1
relates to the data element Foot lesion - active version 1
relates to the data element Foot ulcer - current version 1
relates to the data element Foot ulcer - history version 1
relates to the data element Lower limb amputation due to vascular disease version 1
relates to the data element Peripheral neuropathy - status version 1
relates to the data element Health professionals attended - diabetes mellitus version 1

Administrative Attributes

Source Document: National Diabetes Outcomes Quality Review Initiative (NDOQRIN) data dictionary.

Source Organisation: National Diabetes Data Working Group

Comments: Peripheral vascular disease is the leading cause of occlusion of blood vessels of the extremities with increasing prevalence in individuals with hypertension, hypercholesterolemia and diabetes mellitus, and in cigarette smokers.

Peripheral vascular disease is estimated to occur 11 times more frequently and develop about 10 years earlier in people with diabetes.

