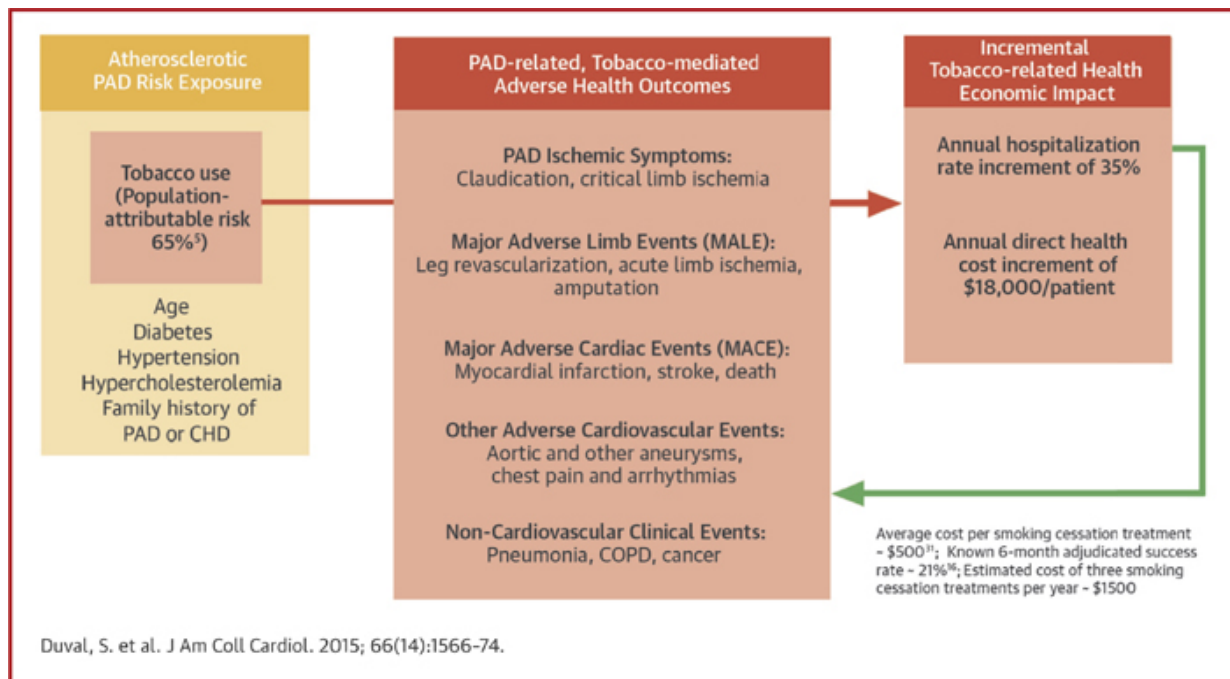


Smoking increases hospitalizations, costs of peripheral artery disease

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Tobacco is the single most powerful modifiable cause of atherosclerotic Peripheral Artery Disease and non-cardiovascular clinical events and hospitalizations. This is associated with an immense increase in annual health care costs. Smoking cessation is effective and costs very little. Credit: Journal of the American College of Cardiology

An analysis of medical costs associated with atherosclerotic lower extremity peripheral artery disease, a dangerous condition in which a

buildup of plaque in the arteries restricts blood flow to the legs and feet, found that health care costs in one year were \$18,000 higher in smokers with the condition than non-smokers with the condition.

Within one year, 49 percent of the tobacco users with PAD in the study were hospitalized, a hospitalization rate 35 percent higher than nonusers.

The study published online today in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, found smokers are more likely to be hospitalized for leg events, heart attack and [coronary heart disease](#) related to atherosclerotic [peripheral artery disease](#), known as PAD, than non-smokers with PAD.

Researchers from the University of Minnesota Medical School, led by Sue Duval, PhD, analyzed claims data for 22,203 individuals with PAD from 2011 from the largest health plan in Minnesota.

An accompanying editorial by Elizabeth Jackson, M.D., MPH, of the University of Michigan Health System, said the study highlights the urgent need for smoking cessation among PAD patients and getting patients to quit can improve care and save significant health dollars over the long term.

The study and editorial are part of a comprehensive Population Health Promotion issue of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* focusing on issues that broadly impact public health and the prevention of cardiovascular disease and related conditions. Population health is a strategic priority of the American College of Cardiology, which recently brought together experts from around the world to address issues such as smoking and nutrition in the context of developing [public health strategies](#) for improving [population health](#).

Provided by American College of Cardiology

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