

# DIABETES CARE<sup>®</sup>

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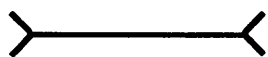
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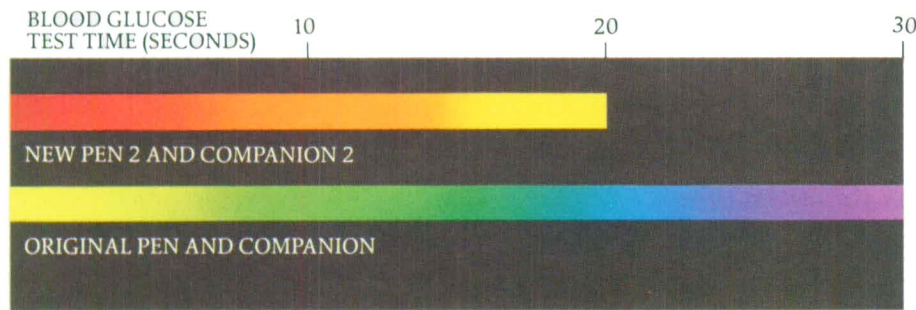
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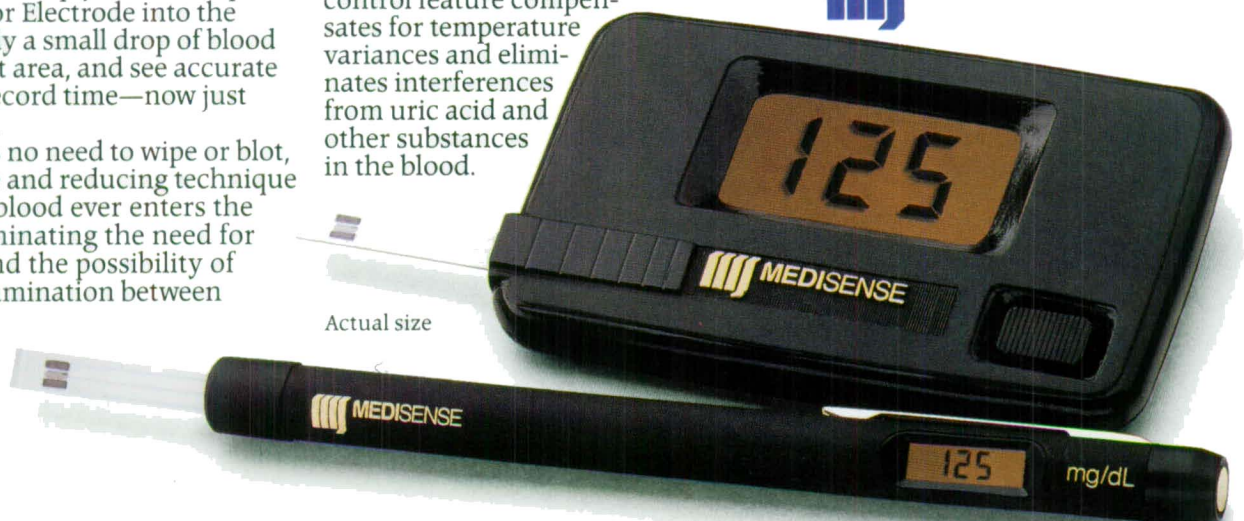
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# IN THIS ISSUE

## Getting Diabetes: A Matter of Time?

If you get old enough, you will get diabetes. Such statements are based on the observation that the prevalence of diabetes, or at least abnormal glucose tolerance tests, increases as the test population becomes older. Mykkänen et al. (p. 1099) report on the results of 75-g oral glucose tolerance tests administered to a randomly selected population of elderly people in small town in east Finland. The average age was ~69 yr. The results of the survey demonstrate a remarkably high prevalence of abnormal tests ranging from frank diabetes to impaired glucose tolerance. All told, >33% of the study population was abnormal based on World Health Organization criteria. Central obesity and a family history of diabetes increased an individual's risk. This study raises the suspicion that diabetes is, at least for some, an inevitable consequence of aging. On the other hand, therapeutic attention to the companions of aging such as treatment of additional disease, loss of lean tissue, change in diet composition, and inactivity may allow us to alter the inevitable. Further studies are needed to confirm this final speculation.

## Weight Gain: A Bitter Fruit?

From a diabetologist's point of view, the 1980s was the decade of tight glycemic control. The 1990s, in contrast, is a time of circumspection as we begin to see the dark side of overly zealous "insulinization." One of the downsides is weight gain. Wing et al. (p. 1106) examine data gleaned from the Wisconsin Epidemiologic Study of Retinopathy to determine whether weight gain correlates with changes in glycosylated hemoglobin among type I (insulin-dependent) diabetic subjects. The analysis demonstrated a strong relationship between the two factors. In fact, those experiencing the greatest drop in HbA<sub>1c</sub> levels gained slightly less than 1 kg/yr. Other circumstances predictive of greater weight gain included switching to multiple daily injections or combinations of long- and short-acting insulin. Now we need to know what are the long-term risks of insulinogenic weight gain. Will such individuals experience accelerated atherosclerosis and hypertension? Meanwhile, we continue to walk the therapeutic tightrope between too much and too little control.

## The Good, the Bad, and the Glycosylated Hemoglobin

What makes a good patient good? Do lower percentages of glycosylated hemoglobin levels reflect the patient's hard work, genetics, or just plain luck? Rost et al. (p. 1111) attempt to answer this question by studying a group of non-insulin-dependent diabetic patients who were divided by the use or nonuse of insulin. The investigators measured frequencies of such behaviors as exercise and meal skipping by self-report. Patients who skipped meals and infrequently performed self-monitoring of blood glucose testing were generally those with the worst diabetic control. This finding applied equally to both insulin users and nonusers, but such self-care behaviors only explained ~25% of the variance in glycosylated hemoglobin. Thus, other factors such as genetics, nature of the individual's diabetes, and selection bias may have a significant impact on diabetic control. But what will happen if we counsel meal skippers to mend their ways? A prospective study is needed to determine whether improved diabetic control is the consequence and not just the concomitant of recalcitrance.

## Diabetes in Blacks

Diabetes in the Black population is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. This issue (p. 1139–1208) includes a symposium supplement on diabetes in Blacks that was presented at the Second National Conference on Diabetes in Blacks: Imperatives for Action that was held in Washington, DC, March 1989. The conference was attended by Dr. Louis Sullivan, Secretary of Health and Human Services, and included health-care professionals with expertise in areas ranging from the genetics of diabetes and obesity in diabetes, to the complications of the disease specifically associated with the Black population. What was actually discovered was the urgent need for the further research of diabetes in the Black population. Diabetes appears to have a greater and more serious impact on the Black population than on the White population, and we hope that this decade will see further research in this important area.



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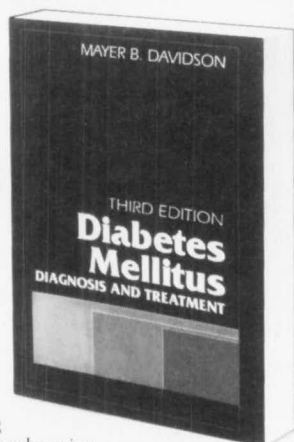
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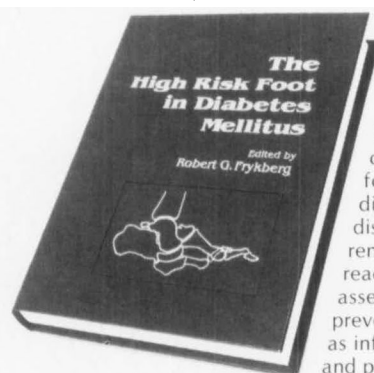
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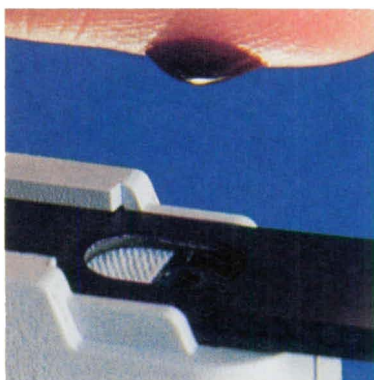
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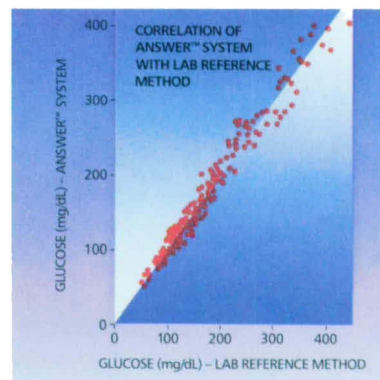
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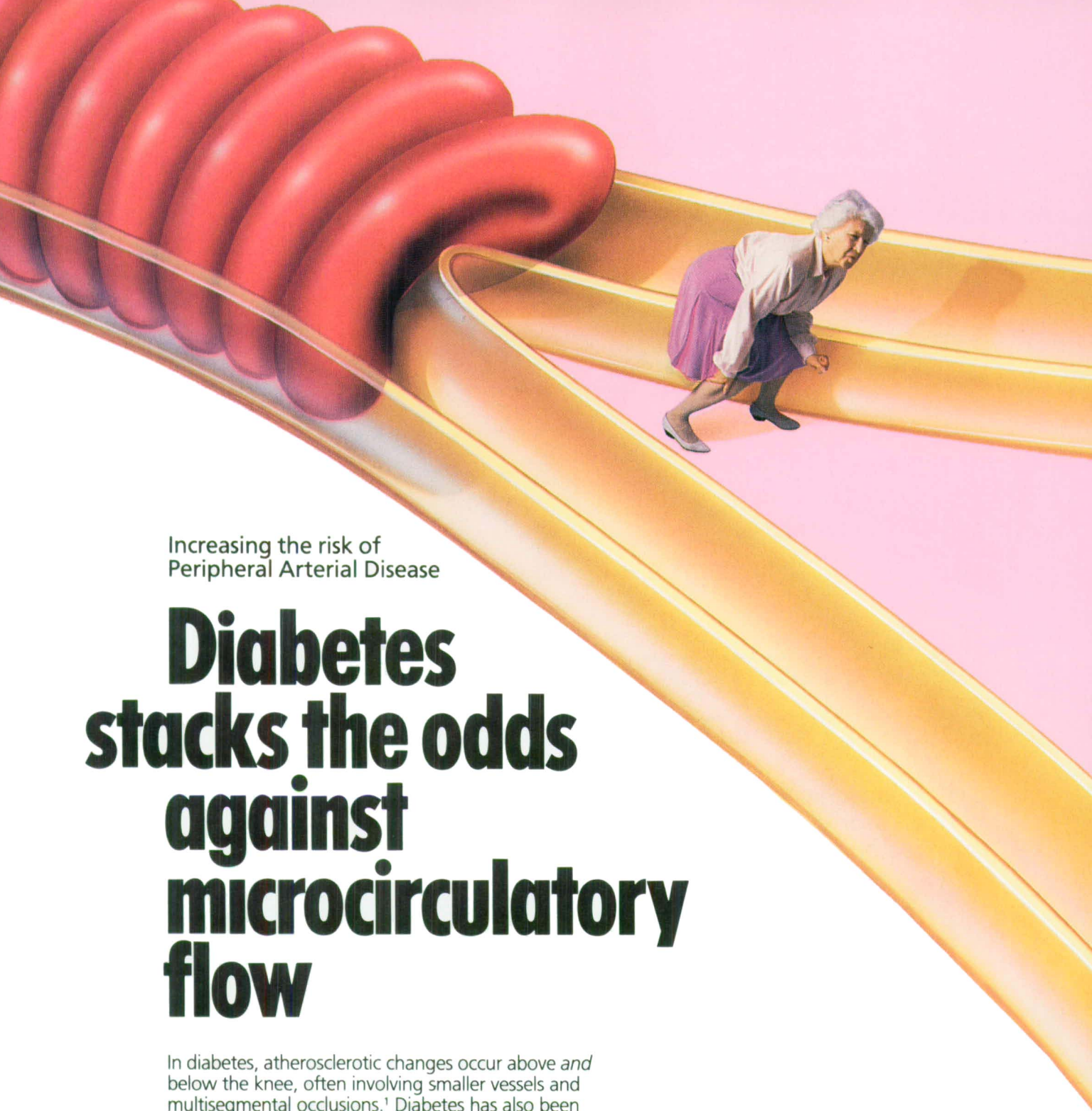
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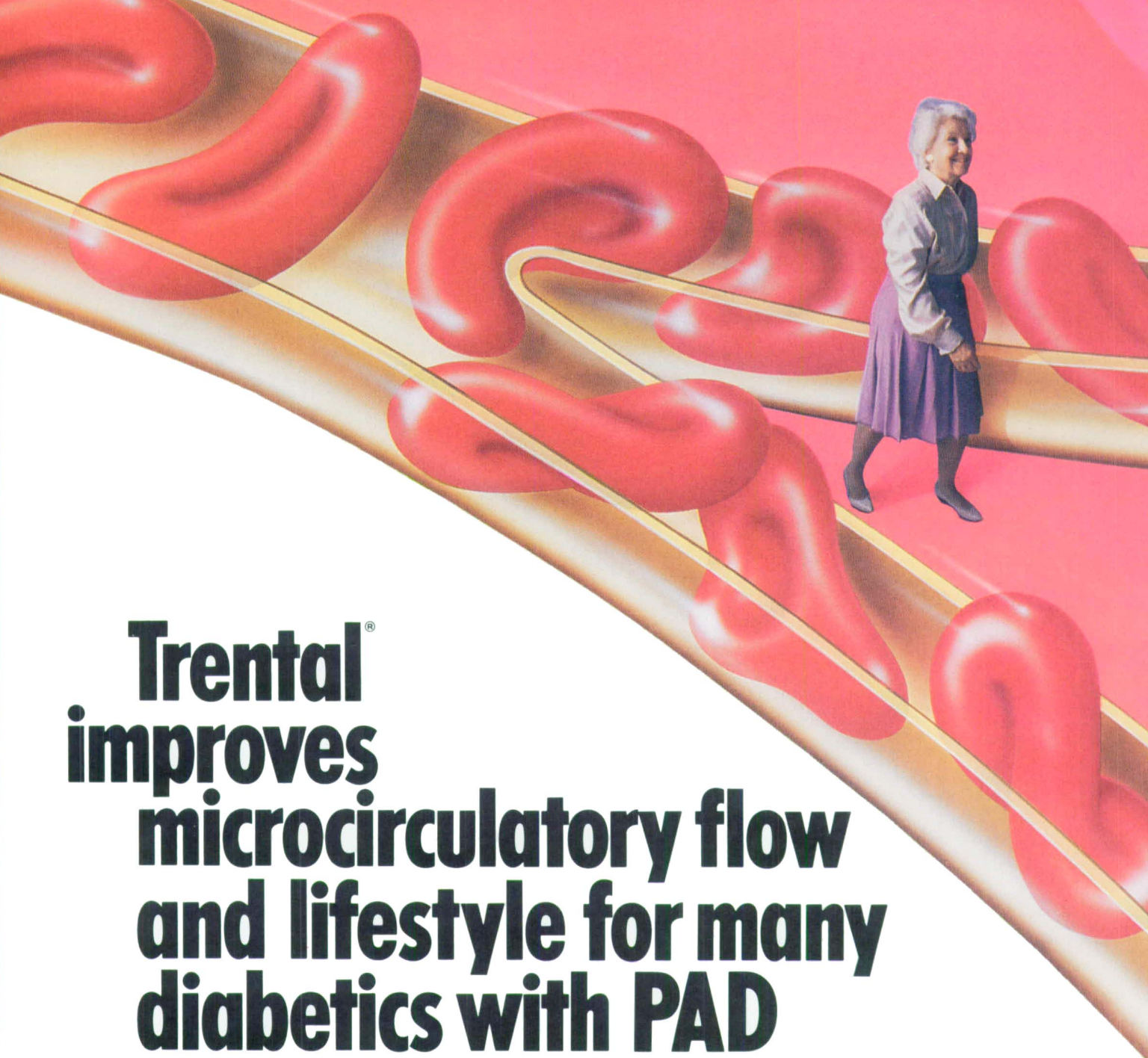
Increasing the risk of  
Peripheral Arterial Disease

# Diabetes stacks the odds against microcirculatory flow

In diabetes, atherosclerotic changes occur above *and* below the knee, often involving smaller vessels and multisegmental occlusions.<sup>1</sup> Diabetes has also been associated with decreased red cell flexibility, and increasing fibrinogen levels, platelet aggregation and platelet adherence, factors which predispose patients to peripheral arterial disease.<sup>1</sup>

Duration of Diabetes	Incidence of PAD
10 years	15%
20 years	45%





# Trental<sup>®</sup> improves microcirculatory flow and lifestyle for many diabetics with PAD

Trental<sup>®</sup> (pentoxifylline) increases red cell flexibility<sup>2</sup> while decreasing elevated plasma fibrinogen levels,<sup>3</sup> aggregation of platelets<sup>4</sup> and red cells.<sup>5</sup> The resulting increase in microcirculatory flow enhances tissue perfusion and oxygenation.<sup>6</sup>

With Trental, patients experience significant improvement in pain-free walking distance, paresthesia, skin temperature and subjective overall response.<sup>7</sup>

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Not a vasodilator • Not an anticoagulant • Not related to aspirin or dipyridamole

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**Trental<sup>®</sup>** 400 mg Tablets (pentoxifylline)



**The only proven-effective agent for intermittent claudication,  
a symptom of peripheral arterial disease**

Please see references and brief summary of prescribing information on following page.  
Trental<sup>®</sup> can improve function and symptoms, but is not intended to replace more  
definitive therapy, such as surgery.

## References:

1. Levin ME, Sicard GA: Evaluating and treating diabetic peripheral vascular disease, Part I. *Clinical Diabetes* May/June 1987; 5:1-10.
2. Stormer B, Kleinschmidt K, Loose D, et al: Rheological changes in the blood of patients with chronic arterial occlusive disease after the administration of vasoactive drugs. *Curr Med Res Opin* 1977; 4:588-595.
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5. Lowe GDO, Drummond MM, Forbes CD, et al: Blood and plasma viscosity in prediction of venous thrombosis. Abstracts: 77. International Symposium on Filterability and Red Blood Cell Deformability, Göteborg, Sweden, Sep 11-13, 1980.
6. Ehrly AM: Effects of orally administered pentoxifylline on muscular oxygen pressure in patients with intermittent claudication. *IRCS Med Sci* 1982; 10:401.
7. Schubotz R: Double-blind trial of pentoxifylline in diabetes with peripheral vascular disorders. *Pharmatherapeutica* 1976; 1(3):172-179.

## Trental® (pentoxifylline) Tablets, 400 mg

A brief summary of the Prescribing Information follows.

## INDICATIONS AND USAGE:

Trental® (pentoxifylline) is indicated for the treatment of patients with intermittent claudication on the basis of chronic occlusive arterial disease of the limbs. Trental® (pentoxifylline) can improve function and symptoms but is not intended to replace more definitive therapy, such as surgical bypass, or removal of arterial obstructions when treating peripheral vascular disease.

## CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Trental® (pentoxifylline) should not be used in patients who have previously exhibited intolerance to this product or methylxanthines such as caffeine, theophylline, and theobromine.

## PRECAUTIONS:

**General:** Patients with chronic occlusive arterial disease of the limbs frequently show other manifestations of arteriosclerotic disease. Trental® (pentoxifylline) has been used safely for treatment of peripheral arterial disease in patients with concurrent coronary artery and cerebrovascular diseases, but there have been occasional reports of angina, hypotension, and arrhythmia. Controlled trials do not show that Trental® (pentoxifylline) causes such adverse effects more often than placebo, but, as it is a methylxanthine derivative, it is possible some individuals will experience such responses.

**Drug Interactions:** Although a causal relationship has not been established, there have been reports of bleeding and/or prolonged prothrombin time in patients treated with Trental® (pentoxifylline) with and without anticoagulants or platelet aggregation inhibitors. Patients on warfarin should have more frequent monitoring of prothrombin times, while patients with other risk factors complicated by hemorrhage (e.g., recent surgery, peptic ulceration) should have periodic examinations for bleeding including hematocrit and/or hemoglobin. Trental® (pentoxifylline) has been used concurrently with antihypertensive drugs, beta blockers, digitalis, diuretics, antiarrhythmic agents, and antiarrhythmics, without observed problems. Small decreases in blood pressure have been observed in some patients treated with Trental® (pentoxifylline); periodic systemic blood pressure monitoring is recommended for patients receiving concomitant antihypertensive therapy. If indicated, dosage of the antihypertensive agents should be reduced.

**Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis and Impairment of Fertility:** Long-term studies of the carcinogenic potential of pentoxifylline were conducted in mice and rats by dietary administration of the drug at doses up to approximately 24 times (570 mg/kg) the maximum recommended human daily dose (MRHD) of 24 mg/kg for 18 months in mice and 18 months in rats with an additional 6 months without drug exposure in the latter. No carcinogenic potential for pentoxifylline was noted in the mouse study. In the rat study, there was a statistically significant increase in benign mammary fibroadenomas in females in the high dose group (24 x MRHD). The relevance of this finding to human use is uncertain since this was only a marginal statistically significant increase for a tumor that is common in aged rats. Pentoxifylline was devoid of mutagenic activity in various strains of *Salmonella* (Ames test) when tested in the presence and absence of metabolic activation.

**Pregnancy:** Category C. Teratogenic studies have been performed in rats and rabbits at oral doses up to about 25 and 10 times the maximum recommended human daily dose (MRHD) of 24 mg/kg, respectively. No evidence of fetal malformation was observed. Increased resorption was seen in rats at 25 times MRHD. There are, however, no adequate and well controlled studies in pregnant women. Because animal reproduction studies are not always predictive of human response, Trental® (pentoxifylline) should be used during pregnancy only if clearly needed.

**Nursing Mothers:** Pentoxifylline and its metabolites are excreted in human milk. Because of the potential for tumorigenicity shown for pentoxifylline in rats, a decision should be made whether to discontinue nursing or discontinue the drug, taking into account the importance of the drug to the mother.

**Pediatric Use:** Safety and effectiveness in children below the age of 18 years have not been established.

## ADVERSE REACTIONS:

Clinical trials were conducted using either controlled-release Trental® (pentoxifylline) tablets for up to 60 weeks or immediate-release Trental® (pentoxifylline) capsules for up to 24 weeks. Dosage ranges in the tablet studies were 400 mg bid to tid and in the capsule studies, 200-400 mg tid. The table summarizes the incidence (in percent) of adverse reactions considered

drug related, as well as the numbers of patients who received controlled-release Trental® (pentoxifylline) tablets, immediate-release Trental® (pentoxifylline) capsules, or the corresponding placebos. The incidence of adverse reactions was higher in the capsule studies (where dose related increases were seen in digestive and nervous system side effects) than in the tablet studies. Studies with the capsule include domestic experience, whereas studies with the controlled-release tablets were conducted outside the U.S. The table indicates that in the tablet studies few patients discontinued because of adverse effects.

## INCIDENCE (%) OF SIDE EFFECTS

	Controlled-Release Tablets		Immediate-Release Capsules	
	Commercially Available	Placebo	Used only for Controlled Clinical Trials	Placebo
(Numbers of Patients at Risk)	Trental® (321)	(128)	Trental® (177)	(138)
Discontinued for Side Effect	3.1	0	9.6	7.2
<b>CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM</b>				
Anginal/Chest Pain	0.3	—	1.1	2.2
Arrhythmia/Palpitation	—	—	1.7	0.7
Flushing	—	—	2.3	0.7
<b>DIGESTIVE SYSTEM</b>				
Abdominal Discomfort	—	—	4.0	1.4
Belching/Flatulence/Bloating	0.6	—	9.0	3.6
Diarrhea	—	—	3.4	2.9
Dyspepsia	2.8	4.7	9.6	2.9
Nausea	2.2	0.8	28.8	8.7
Vomiting	1.2	—	4.5	0.7
<b>NERVOUS SYSTEM</b>				
Agitation/Nervousness	—	—	1.7	0.7
Dizziness	1.9	3.1	11.9	4.3
Drowsiness	—	—	1.1	5.8
Headache	1.2	1.6	6.2	5.8
Insomnia	—	—	2.3	2.2
Tremor	0.3	0.8	—	—
Blurred Vision	—	—	2.3	1.4

Trental® (pentoxifylline) has been marketed in Europe and elsewhere since 1972. In addition to the above symptoms, the following have been reported spontaneously since marketing or occurred in other clinical trials with an incidence of less than 1%: the causal relationship was uncertain:

Cardiovascular—dyspnea, edema, hypotension.

Digestive—anorexia, cholecystitis, constipation, dry mouth/thirst.

Nervous—anxiety, confusion.

Respiratory—epistaxis, flu-like symptoms, laryngitis, nasal congestion.

Skin and Appendages—brittle fingernails, pruritus, rash, urticaria, angioedema.

Special Senses—blurred vision, conjunctivitis, earache, scotoma.

Miscellaneous—bad taste, excessive salivation, leukopenia, malaise, sore throat/swollen neck glands, weight change.

A few rare events have been reported spontaneously worldwide since marketing in 1972. Although they occurred under circumstances in which a causal relationship with pentoxifylline could not be established, they are listed to serve as information for physicians: Cardiovascular—angina, arrhythmia, tachycardia; Digestive—hepatitis, jaundice, increased liver enzymes; and Hematologic and Lymphatic—decreased serum fibrinogen, pancytopenia, aplastic anemia, purpura, thrombocytopenia.

## OVERDOSAGE:

Overdosage with Trental® (pentoxifylline) has been reported in children and adults. Symptoms appear to be dose related. A report from a poison control center on 44 patients taking overdoses of enteric-coated pentoxifylline tablets noted that symptoms usually occurred 4-5 hours after ingestion and lasted about 12 hours. The highest amount ingested was 80 mg/kg; flushing, hypotension, convulsions, somnolence, loss of consciousness, fever, and agitation occurred. All patients recovered.

In addition to symptomatic treatment and gastric lavage, special attention must be given to supporting respiration, maintaining systemic blood pressure, and controlling convulsions. Activated charcoal has been used to adsorb pentoxifylline in patients who have overdosed.

## DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION:

The usual dosage of Trental® (pentoxifylline) in controlled-release tablet form is one tablet (400 mg) three times a day with meals.

While the effect of Trental® (pentoxifylline) may be seen within 2 to 4 weeks, it is recommended that treatment be continued for at least 8 weeks. Efficacy has been demonstrated in double-blind clinical studies of 6 months duration.

Digestive and central nervous system side effects are dose related. If patients develop these side effects it is recommended that the dosage be lowered to one tablet twice a day (800 mg/day). If side effects persist at this lower dosage, the administration of Trental® (pentoxifylline) should be discontinued. Edition 2/88 Trental® REG TM HOECHST AG

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**Trental®** 400 mg Tablets  
(pentoxifylline)

The only proven-effective agent for intermittent claudication, a symptom of peripheral arterial disease





The  
results  
are worth  
waiting for.

**Patience pays off  
when you start a patient  
on Trental®**

Trental® therapy can make a dramatic difference to your patients – increasing their mobility and independence, enhancing their participation in social and professional activities, and giving them a fresh outlook on life. But, the physical improvement behind these benefits doesn't happen overnight. It's a gradual process.

**3x3=success  
with Trental® treatment**

To start patients off on the right foot with Trental®, follow the 3x3 formula for success.

**3 tablets a day,  
with meals**

The usual dosage of Trental® is one 400 mg tablet taken 3 times a day, with a full meal.

**3-month initial trial,  
evaluate, then continue**

While patients might feel somewhat better within weeks, at least 3 months' therapy is generally required before the full effectiveness of Trental® becomes evident. To sustain improvement, therapy must be continued.



**Trental®**  
(pentoxifylline)  
400 mg  
Tablets

The only proven-effective agent  
for intermittent claudication—a symptom  
of peripheral arterial disease



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<sup>1</sup> Roland JM: Need Stable Diabetics Mix Their Insulins? *Diabetic Medicine* 1985;2:51-53. ©Novo Nordisk Pharmaceuticals Inc. 1990

