



RESEARCH TO
PRACTICE 2018

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EXERCISE INTOLERANCE IN PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE: LOOKING BEYOND THE BLOCKAGES

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Patients with peripheral arterial disease (PAD) have a very high risk of myocardial infarction and stroke, and a reduced exercise capacity that limits their mobility and quality of life. Atherosclerotic “blockages” limit leg blood flow, and in severe cases this can lead to gangrene and the need for amputation. While vascular surgery can improve blood flow and save the limb, surgery does not fully restore exercise capacity in patients with PAD. In contrast, exercise training leads to large improvements in exercise tolerance without any changes in blood flow. Therefore, while exercise training is widely recommended for PAD patients, we do not fully understand what limits their exercise tolerance and why exercise training is beneficial. This presentation will look “beyond the blockages” and draw on recent work from our group and others about the importance of vascular function and capillary morphology on muscle function and exercise capacity. With an ageing population, there has been a rapid rise in the prevalence of PAD. A better understanding of the mechanisms of exercise intolerance will help optimise exercise prescription as part of the treatment of PAD, and lead to better outcomes for patients.

Abstract number: 035
Session: Mechanisms of Exercise Intolerance in Chronic Disease
Date: Thursday, 29 March 2018
Time: 9:00am – 10:30am
Co-Presenters: Dr Erin Howden; A/Prof Christopher Askew; A/Prof Andre La Gerche
Panel Practitioner: Mr Grant Turner
Session Chairperson: W/Prof Daniel Green