

Department of Family Medicine October Meeting Minutes

Date: October 10, 2025

Time: 7:00am

Attendees: Dr. Sangita Pillai, Dr. Christen Fragala, Dr. Malina Holmes, Dr. Chong So, Dr. Joseph Dulac, Dr. Cara Marshall, Dr. John Ragucci, Dr. Jennifer Wolf, Dr. Roberto Larios, Dr. Catherine Trinh, Dr. Audra Williams, Dr. Margaret Mills, Lori McCall, RN, Clinical Manager, AnneMarie Aquino, RN, Clinical Manager, Mary Retman, RN, Quality Improvement Specialist, Maxine Miller

Guests: Dr. Swati Chaparala, Katherine Cuddy

I. Call to Order

- Dr. Pillai called the meeting to order at 7:00am.

II. Approval of Minutes

- The department approved the previous minutes of September with edits that Dr. Pillai emailed about.

III. New Business

- A reminder that all workforce members are required to receive the flu vaccine by the end of the month.
- Dr. Pillai sent a link of the current Flu Clinic dates being offer through out Tufts Medicine. There are dates at Saints Campus as well as Main Campus.
- If you get your flu shot at one of the listed Clinics then it will be automatically recorded, and Occupational Health will have the information.
- Employed physicians with a Tufts Medicine email address will need to upload their flu vaccines records into PureOHS if you are getting it from an outside vendor.
- If you are not employed or do not have an active Tufts Medicine email, you can email your vaccine records to OccupationalHealthLGH@tuftsmedicine.org.
- A signed declination needs to be signed if not receiving the COVID vaccine.
- Point32Health is now Tufts Health Plan and Harvard Pilgrim Health Plan combined. They are prorating the cost of contracts for the rest of 2025 and Dr. Pillai told the department that she recently accepted a contract.

IV. Old Business

a. Medical Executive Committee

- The Chief of Pediatrics informed everyone on the RSV guidelines which state that a mother can only receive the RSV vaccine once.
- There seems to be a low use in ambient AI within Lowell General Hospital so far.
- It is also known as Dragon Ambient Experience or DAX.



- They are attributing to the low turnout due to it only being available on Apple iPhones. However, in November of 2025, DAX will be available on Androids as well.
- Back in June, Dr. Frank Osborn, the Ambulatory CMO announced that all ambulatory physicians and advanced practice clinicians are eligible to use DAX.
- It is an AI generated application on your phone that will transcribe your notes in real time.
- Those interested in potentially using it will need to fill out a questionnaire to get access.
- Dr. Holmes mentioned that she uses it and said that there are adjustable settings. She likes concise notes.
- Paloalto Global Protect VPN will be replacing the Citrix VPN. You will need to download this in order to access Epic remotely.

b. Labor and Delivery Committee

- Dr. Holmes informed the department that the Labor & Deliver Committee have been working on is creating outpatient cervical ripening protocols which would include starting inductions outside of the hospital.
- The Committee has also been working on a new Bladder Urinary Retention Protocol which would mean intervening sooner than a lot of physicians typically would, which is what newer evidence supports.

c. Cancer Committee

- No one was on the call to give an update.

d. Credentials Committee

- Dr. Marshall informed the department that there were no major updates.

e. Morbidity and Mortality Council

- No update was given.

f. Perinatal Committee

- There were no updates on Perinatal Committee as they meet next week.

g. MCH Updates

- No updates were given.

h. DEI Update

- The mentorship program is in effect starting the 1st of this month. There have been the most applications received in the history of the program so there has been a challenge matching everyone but luckily everyone was matched.
- There might be some requests to have a mentee shadow for one day or a half day.

i. Family Medicine Residency Program

- Dr. Marshall said that the first round of interviews started yesterday and went very well. Interviews will continue throughout the next couple of months.



j. Bridge Clinic

- No updates were given.

k. Mass Medical Society

- Dr. Dulac said to look out on the Mass Medical Society website for the registration for the Fall Meeting.

l. Inpatient Care Update

- Dr. Pillai introduced Dr. Roberto Larios to the department who is actually a long term member of the medical staff at Lowell General Hospital.
- Dr. Larios works for the hospitalist group and is also a Family Medicine physician as well.
- He has worked at Lowell General Hospital since 2014 and works as an adult hospitalist and nocturnist in Critical Care in the ICU.
- Dr. Lario expressed interest in teaching when the Family Resident program is up and running.
- He did his medical training and schooling in Columbia and originally studied Anesthesiology. He has extensive training in Anesthesiology.
- He did his Family Medicine Residency and UMass in Fitchburg.

V. Vascular Services and Referrals

- Dr. Pillai invited Dr. Swati Chaparala to the department meeting to discuss the new Vascular and Vein Center that opened which is a collaboration between Tufts Medicine, Lowell General Hospital, The Vascular Care Group and Commonwealth Radiology.
- Dr. Chaparala is a board certified vascular surgeon and earned her medical degree from Northeast Ohio Medical University and did her residency in Vascular and Endovascular Surgery at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.
- She served as an assistant professor in Division of Vascular Surgery and the University of Maryland School of Medicine.
- She works closely with Dr. Oriel who is also a vascular surgeon. Some other physicians that work in the clinic are Dr. Gregg Franco and Dr. Allan Hoffman who are both Interventional Radiologists and Dr. Nathan Riddell who is an Interventional Cardiologist. Dr. Paul Burke is also a member of the group who does mostly sees patients in the clinic and does wound care.
- The Vascular and Vein Center is a full clinic with procedure rooms. There are usually two or three ultrasound technicians working per day doing vascular ultrasounds in the outpatient based lab where they are able to do catheter based procedures.
- Dr. Chaparala discussed the conditions treated at the clinic and include aneurysm disease, carotid disease and peripheral arterial disease.
- She emphasized the importance of early intervention and stated that the clinic offers preventative care, preoperative management and surveillance protocols.
- Various treatments are offered including angiograms, stenting, angioplasty, and embolization's to manage conditions like cerebrovascular disease.
- The slides were sent via email, and I will also be attaching them to the end of the meeting minutes.



VI. Adjournment & Other Discussion

- The meeting adjourned at 8:05am.

Next Meeting:

Friday, November 14, 2025, 7:00AM via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,

Maxine Miller

Maxine Miller
Medical Staff Coordinator

Approved by:

Sangita Pillai, MD
Chief, Department of Family Medicine

Date





TuftsMedicine
Lowell General Hospital
Vascular + Vein Center



Vascular Care in Lowell

Swati Chaparala, MD, RPVI
2025

October 10,

Tufts Vascular + Vein Center



**1115 Westford Street
2nd Floor
Lowell, MA 01851**



Vascular + Vein Center



Vascular Surgery



Brad S. Oriel, MD



Swati Chaparala, MD

Vascular (Clinic/Wound Care)



Paul Burke, MD

Interventional Radiology/ Vascular Specialists

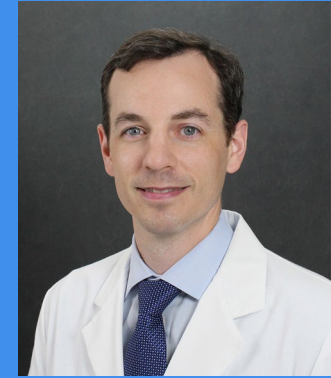


Allan Hoffman, MD



Gregg Franco, MD

Interventional Cardiology/ Vascular Specialist



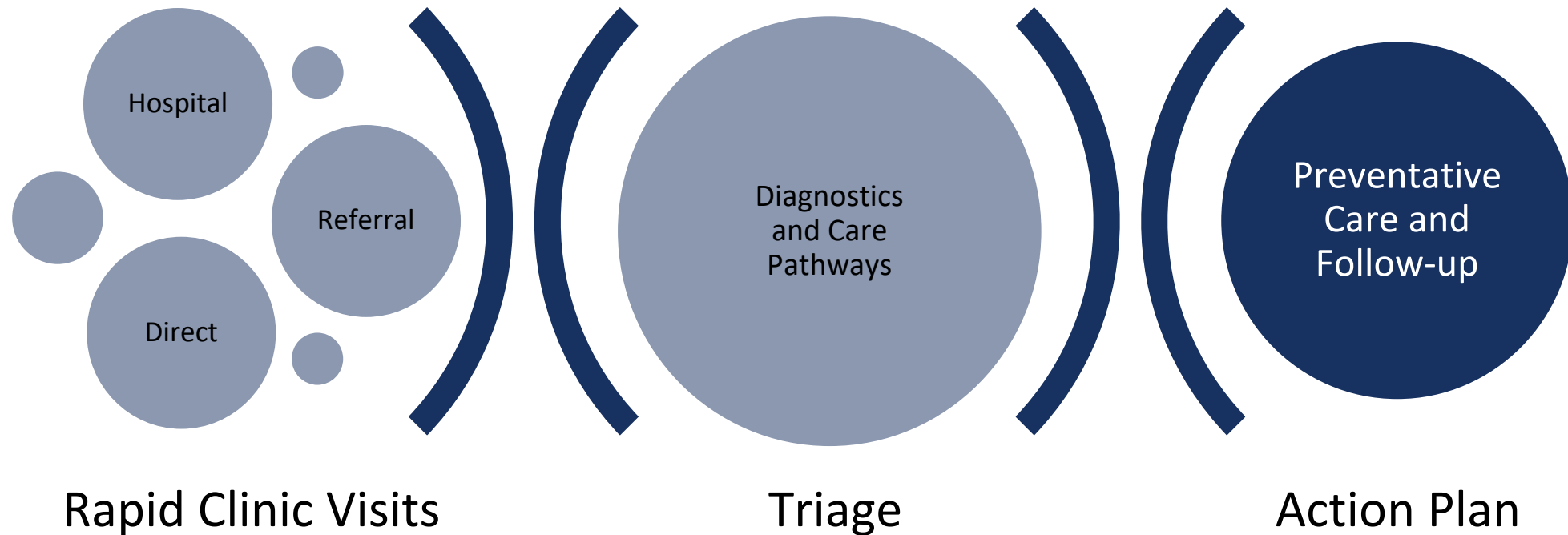
Nathan Riddell, MD

What We Treat and Manage

Many conditions have open surgical and minimally invasive options for treatment!

- ☐ Aneurysm Disease
- ☐ Hemodialysis and Access Work
- ☐ Carotid Artery Disease
- ☐ Peripheral Arterial Disease
- ☐ Venous Disease
- ☐ Renal and Mesenteric Disease
- ☐ Embolotherapy
 - Bleeding Disorders (Fibroid, hemorrhoid)
 - Orthopedics
- ☐ Vascular Anomalies and Malformations
- ☐ Wound Care
- ☐ Vascular Lab/Ultrasound
- ☐ Cancer
- ☐ Pain Management
 - Vertebral compression fractures
 - Sacral insufficiency fractures
 - Joint pain
- ☐ Biopsy & Drainage
- ☐ Liver Disease
- ☐ Kidney Failure
- ☐ Urinary Obstruction
- ☐ Women's Health
- ☐ Men's Health
- ☐ Cosmetic

Vascular + Vein Center: Providing care in the community



Integrated and Collaborative Care

For patients, rapid access to integrated care with optimized site of service

Office / Outpatient Center



- Rapid Access to E&M and Initial Diagnostics
- Lower Acuity and / or Interventional Cases

Community Hospital



- Higher Acuity Endovascular Cases
- Open Surgical Cases
- CT / MRI Diagnostics

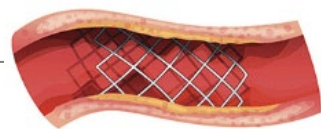
Regional Hospital



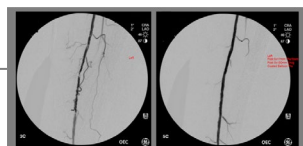
- Complex Tertiary and Quaternary Care

Complexity & Risk

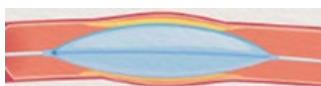
Ambulatory Optimized



Stent



Angiogram/Venogram



Angioplasty



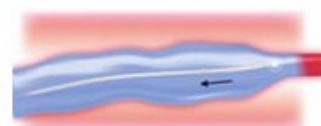
Atherectomy



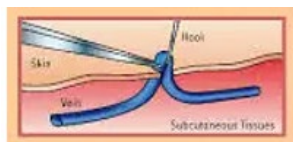
Thrombectomy



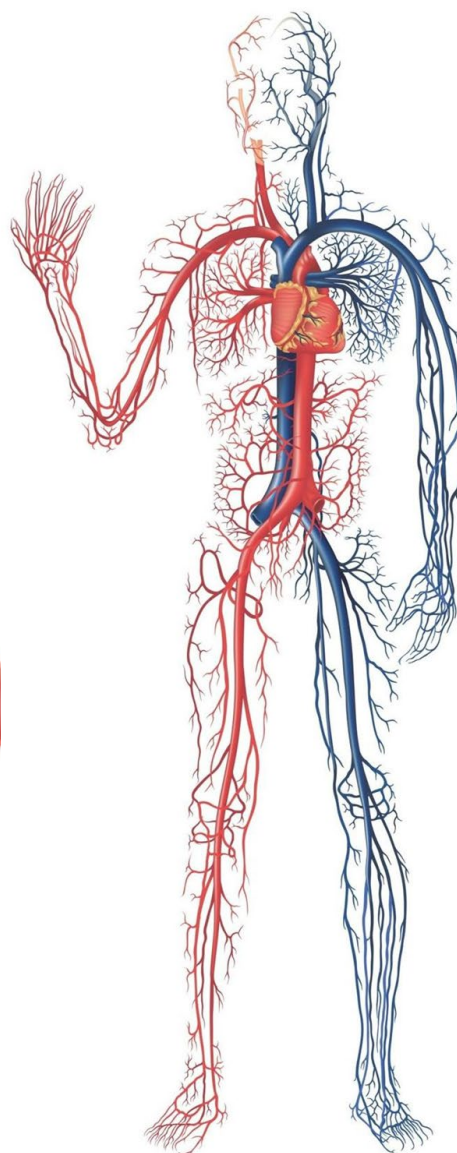
Embolization



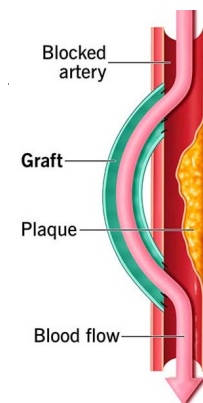
Ablation



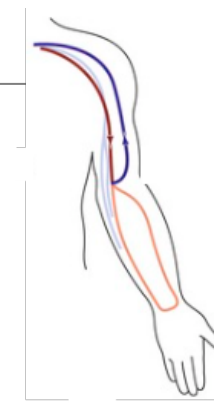
Phlebectomy



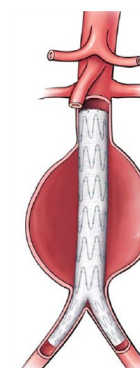
Hospital Only



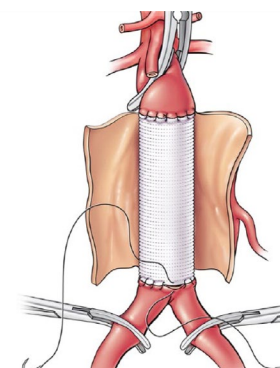
Arterial Bypass



Dialysis Access



Endo and Open AAA Repair

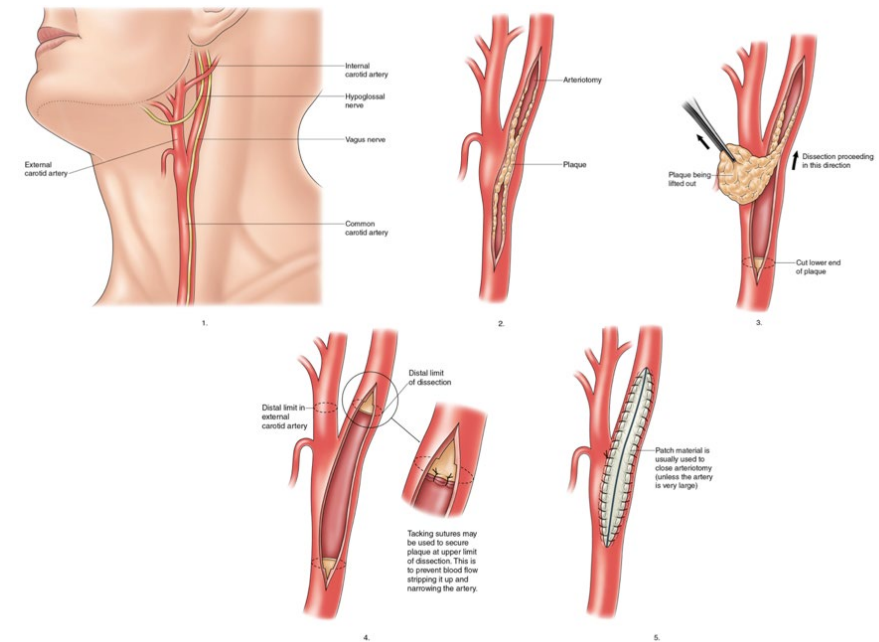


When to Refer : Carotid

Carotid stenosis >50%

Vertebral artery stenosis

Subclavian artery stenosis (blood pressure discrepancy >30mmHg)



c/o Vascutek UK

When to Refer: Aneurysm

Abdominal aortic aneurysm $> 3.0\text{cm}$ (fusiform)

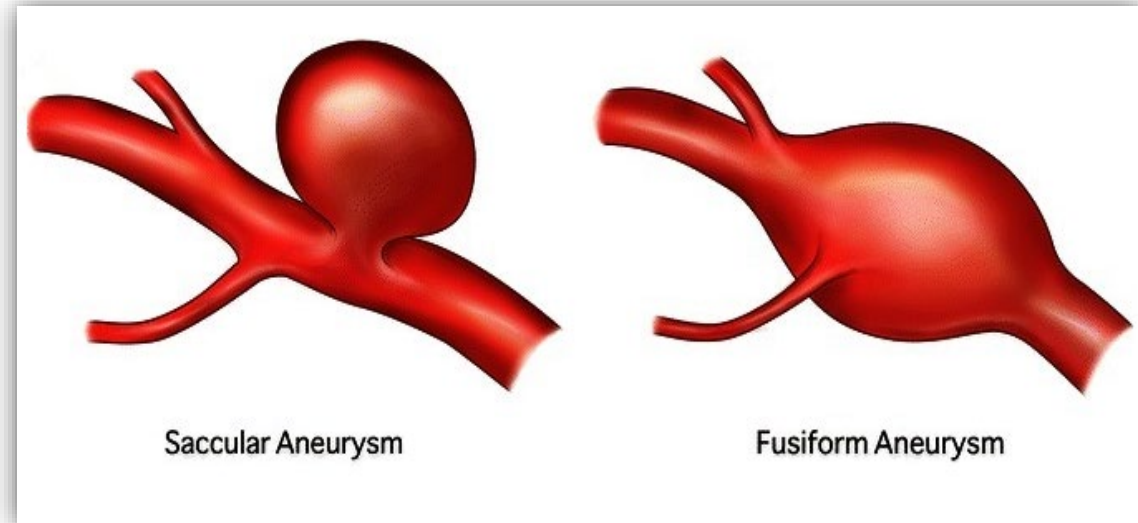
Any saccular abdominal aortic aneurysm

Thoracic aortic aneurysm $> 3.0\text{cm}$

Any visceral aneurysm

Popliteal aneurysm $> 1.5\text{cm}$

Any peripheral aneurysm (femoral, upper extremity, subclavian etc)

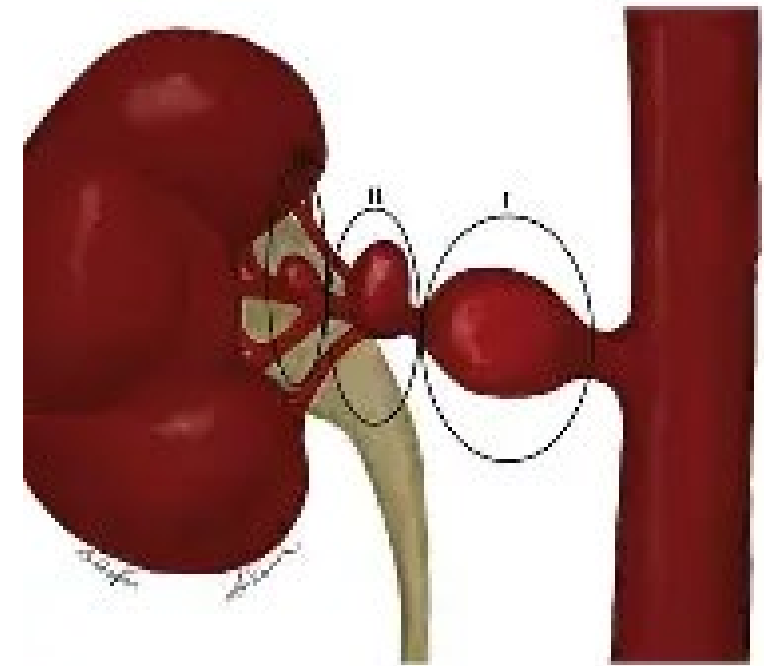


When to Refer: Kidney disease

Concern for renovascular hypertension or renal FMD

Chronic Kidney Disease stage 4 or 5, ESRD with need for hemodialysis access

Renal artery aneurysms



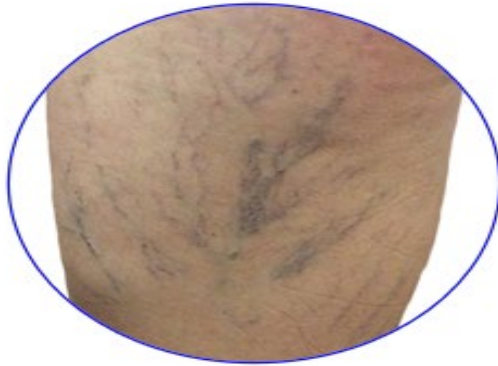
When to Refer: PAD

CHRONIC LIMB THREATENING ISCHEMIA (CLTI)

Claudication
↓
Rest pain
↓
Ulceration
↓
Gangrene
↓
Limb loss



When to Refer: Venous disease



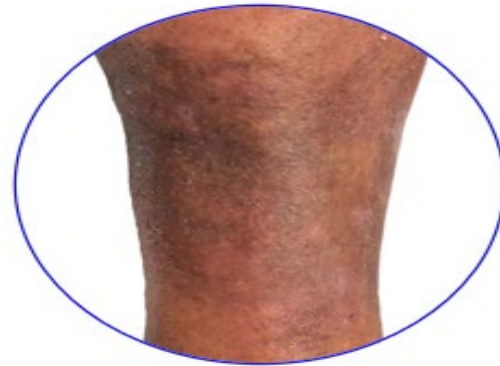
Spider veins



Varicose veins



Swelling



Skin color changes

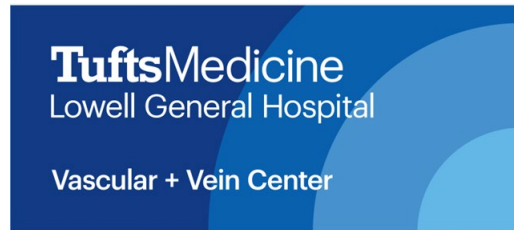


Skin cracking/sores

But First! Optimized Medical Therapy

- Lifestyle Modification
 - Exercise
 - Quit Smoking
 - Diet
- Risk Factor Modification
 - Blood pressure control
 - Diabetes
 - Cholesterol
- Medications
 - Antiplatelet (81mg ASA)
 - Statin

About Vascular + Vein Center



Care Team

Brad S. Oriel, MD, RPVI
Allan I. Hoffman, MD
Gregg Franco, MD
Swati Chaparala, MD
Nathan Riddell, MD

Contact Information

Phone: (351) 221-7080
Fax: (978) 856-8080

Office Address

1115 Westford St
2nd Floor
Lowell, MA 01851

Referring to Vascular + Vein Center

In EPIC

INT: LGH: CC Tufts Medicine Vascular & Vein Center

OR

Ambulatory Referral to Vascular Surgery (specify provider name)

NOT INT: Tufts Medical Vascular Surgery (patient will be sent to Boston)