What is a Vascular screening?

The Vascular screenings consist of three different tests: a Carotid Doppler Ultrasound, an Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA), and an Ankle-Brachial Index (ABI).

* Carotid doppler ultrasound is a non-invasive test that uses sound waves to measure the flow of blood through the large carotid arteries that supply blood to the brain. These arteries can become narrowed due to arteriosclerosis or other causes, and this can lead to transient ischemic attack (mini-stroke) or cerebral vascular accident (stroke). The carotid doppler test can help doctors determine stroke risk and the need for preventive measures.

* An abdominal aortic aneurysm, or AAA, is a ballooning of the aorta, the largest blood vessel in the human body, which extends into the abdomen. If the wall of this blood vessel becomes weakened, it can stretch, "balloon" out and rupture. A rupture, if left untreated, can lead to life-threatening internal bleeding. Ruptured AAAs are the 10th leading cause of death in men over age 50 in the United States, resulting in over 15,000 deaths annually. The exact cause of this condition is unknown. However, it often occurs in older adults, especially males, those with a high cholesterol level, and in smokers. There also tends to be a genetic link to this disorder. This condition usually does not cause symptoms, but an abdominal ultrasound can accurately detect and determine the size of aneurysms about 98% of the time. This is a simple test that uses sound waves to create an image of the aorta to determine vessel size.

* An Ankle-Brachial Index, or ABI, is a simple, reliable means for diagnosing peripheral artery disease (PAD). Blood pressure measurements are taken at the arms and ankles using a pencil shaped ultrasound device called a Doppler. A Doppler instrument produces sound waves (not x-rays) and is considered noninvasive because it does not require the use of needles or catheters. The ABI test is simple enough to be performed in any doctor's office or vascular laboratory. Not only is the ABI one of the most reliable tests for PAD, it is also the least expensive.

How do I know if I qualify for Vascular Screening(s)?

If you answer ‘Yes’ to 2 or more of the following, then you may qualify for the Vascular screenings.

- Have you been diagnosed with diabetes?
- Are you 55 years of age or older?
- Are you a smoker?
- Have you been diagnosed with high blood pressure?
- Do you have a family history of heart attack?

To register for this additional screening, please call 1.800.4BAYLOR.

If you answered ‘No’ to all questions, then you are not eligible to participate in the Vascular screenings.