



To find out if a surgeon is certified in vascular surgery, contact the address below.



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### What is the Vascular Surgery Board of the American Board of Surgery?

Board certification in vascular surgery was first offered in 1982 as a way to evaluate, examine and recognize surgeons who had completed specialized training in the field of vascular surgery. The Vascular Surgery Board of the American Board of Surgery was established to define all requirements and processes related to board certification in vascular surgery. It is composed of nationally prominent vascular surgeons who represent the leading vascular surgery organizations in the U.S.

The American Board of Surgery was founded in 1937 to certify individuals who meet a standard of excellence in the field of surgery. The ABS is one of the 24 certifying boards that are members of the American Board of Medical Specialties.

For more information about board certification in vascular surgery, please visit [www.absurgery.org](http://www.absurgery.org).

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Your Surgeon  
is Certified by  
the Vascular  
Surgery Board  
of the  
American Board  
of Surgery



## Your Surgeon is Certified by the Vascular Surgery Board

Certification by the Vascular Surgery Board of the American Board of Surgery (VSB-ABS) means that a surgeon has met the highest standards of education, training and knowledge in the specialty of vascular surgery.

Such surgeons have comprehensive expertise in the diagnosis and care of patients with diseases and disorders of the blood vessels—specifically the arteries, veins and lymphatic system outside of the brain and heart. In addition, they are trained to treat vascular disease by medical (non-surgical) means, including the use of drug therapy and management of risk factors.

### Common problems managed by vascular surgeons include:

- artery blockages that lead to stroke
- artery blockages in the arms, legs and abdominal organs
- varicose veins and other venous disorders
- aneurysms (bulges) in the aorta (main artery of the body) and other arteries
- trauma (injury) to blood vessels
- the critical care of patients suffering from vascular disease
- blood vessel access for kidney dialysis
- leg ulcers (arterial, venous, and diabetic)

These problems may be treated by traditional open surgery as well as by endovascular (minimally invasive) procedures that use balloon angioplasty and stents. Vascular surgeons also perform diagnostic tests, such as duplex ultrasound and angiography, to detect vascular problems. They are also familiar with the interpretation of MRI and CT scans.

## What is Board Certification?

Board certification by the VSB-ABS is intended to assess the qualifications of individuals who have completed extensive education and training in vascular surgery. Not all vascular surgeons are board certified. Board certification is voluntary and demonstrates a surgeon's commitment to quality patient care. In contrast, medical licensure is required by state law for an individual to practice medicine and is not specialty specific.

## What are the Requirements for Board Certification?

Board certification by the VSB-ABS has specific educational, experience, and examination requirements.

### The requirements for certification include:

- Graduation from an accredited medical school in the U.S. or Canada, or certification by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates.
- Satisfactory completion of a vascular surgery training program in the U.S. or Canada accredited by either the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. During this training, the surgeon must gain broad experience in the management of peripheral vascular disease.
- Attestation by the director of the training program to the individual's surgical skills, ethics and professionalism.
- Possession of a valid license to practice medicine in the U.S. or Canada.
- Successful completion of a written examination known as the Qualifying Examination, which assesses an individual's knowledge of vascular surgery.

- Successful completion of an oral examination called the Certifying Examination, which is designed to evaluate surgical judgment and decision-making. Candidates are interviewed by experienced surgeons who assess their ability to diagnose and treat diverse problems in vascular surgery, as well as manage potential complications.

Certification in vascular surgery is valid for 10 years. To renew their certification, surgeons must demonstrate a commitment to professionalism and continuing education as well as pass a written examination. This has recently been expanded into a more continuous process called Maintenance of Certification (MOC), with new requirements for assessment of practice performance.

As of July 2006, board certification in vascular surgery may be pursued without prior certification in general surgery. Surgeons certified in vascular surgery before this date may maintain certification in vascular surgery without renewing their certification in general surgery.

