**Lafayette Vein and Vascular Center**

**EXERCISE PROGRAM FOR PATIENTS WITH CLAUDICATION**

Your provider has determined that you have a condition called "intermittent claudication." This means that you experience pain in your buttocks, thigh, and/or calves which occurs only after you have walked a certain distance. The pain causes you to stop and rest for a few minutes. The pain returns when you walk the same distance again. It may occur in one or both legs. One leg may be more severely affected that the other. Your condition is caused by poor circulation (narrow or blocked blood vessels). Scientific studies have shown that a regular walking program can significantly increase the distance you walk before you must stop. However, you must exercise in a particular way to benefit. Set aside 30-40 minutes during the day to walk. This is separate from your normal daily activities, such as work, household chores, etc. During this time, you should walk on level ground, such as a mall, at your normal pace. Stop when your legs first begin to hurt. Then continue the start and stop pattern until 30-40 minutes has passed, including your rest periods. You must exercise at least three times a week, four-five time is better, for a duration of five to six months. Most patients are able to walk noticeably farther, many can double their walking distance, after this period of time. You must continue to walk regularly to maintain this improvement. In addition to improving your walking ability, regular exercise helps patients control blood pressure, lower blood sugars (in people with diabetes), lose weight, and improve heart and lung function. Moreover, the benefits from exercise are in addition to the benefits you may obtain from other treatments, such as certain medications.