



LEARN Faculty Spotlight

Mark L. Lessne, MD

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Dr. Mark L. Lessne was interviewed by Dr. Bret Wiechmann, LEARN Program Planning Committee member.

Dr. Wiechmann: Mark, Welcome to the LEARN faculty! Tell me a little about your practice and your specific areas of interest in peripheral arterial disease (PAD).

Dr. Lessne: It's an absolute pleasure being involved with LEARN. I am currently in a large private group in Charlotte, NC with both diagnostic and vascular interventional radiologists. There is no university in Charlotte, so we are the *de facto* academic center. We have 14 VIRs, of which about 6 of us have a focus on PAD. I have clinics at 3 different sites and while I see a mix of vascular disease, there is a focus on limb salvage in patients with critical limb ischemia.

Dr. Wiechmann: Give me your perspective on practice building activities regarding PAD referrals. Are you a "lunch & LEARN" guy (no pun intended), "referral dinner" guy? What works for you and your practice?

Dr. Lessne: A mentor of mine once described me as having the most "shotgun" approach to practice building he's ever seen: I try everything and see what sticks. I have given grand rounds to internists, podiatrists, endocrinologists; spoken at regional wound care and podiatry meetings; routinely meet with referring doctors during the day and after work; publish educational articles in other specialists' journals; host educational seminars for the public. For me, educating providers (and patients) about vascular disease prevention and management is as much a part of the work as obtaining referrals: well-informed physicians and patients translate to lives and limbs saved!

Dr. Wiechmann: Tell me what you know about LEARN, and what you look forward to most about being part of this year's faculty?

Dr. Lessne: I attended LEARN my 1st year out of practice. I had pretty good vascular training as a fellow, but joined a large academic practice where no one else was doing PAD work, so I was on my own to improve my skills. I thought the LEARN course was incredibly practical and motivational and definitely helped me "up my game". The future of IR is incredibly bright, but is contingent upon energetic, motivated, and patient-focused physicians to lead: I look forward to invigorating new IRs (or experienced IRs who want more training) to join the fight against PAD and CLI!