



Social Workers Helping New Amputees

Yale New Haven Hospital
February 4, 2021



Active and Accomplished

- * Advocate for the Limb Loss Community of Connecticut
- * Co-founders, Connecticut Amputee Network (CAN)
- * Certified Peer Visitor
- * YNHH Volunteer
- * Speaker and writer advocating for amputee rights



Advocating for Amputees

- * Amputee Coalition Certified Peer Visitor and YNHH Volunteer
- * Successful legislative advocates for the Limb Loss Community in Connecticut:
 - * 2018 passage of law requiring private health insurance plans to cover prosthetics based on medical necessity
- * Amputee Coalition Lead Advocates, leading other amputee citizen advocates in 29 states that do not yet have insurance fairness for prosthetics

Experts in Amputee Experience

- ▶ 17+ combined years' **personal experience** living with limb loss
- ▶ Understand that **Patient-Centric Care** includes all healthcare professionals
 - Doctors
 - Nurses
 - Technicians
 - Prosthetists
 - Physical Therapists
 - Occupational Therapists
 - **Mental Health professionals**
 - **Peer Visitors**



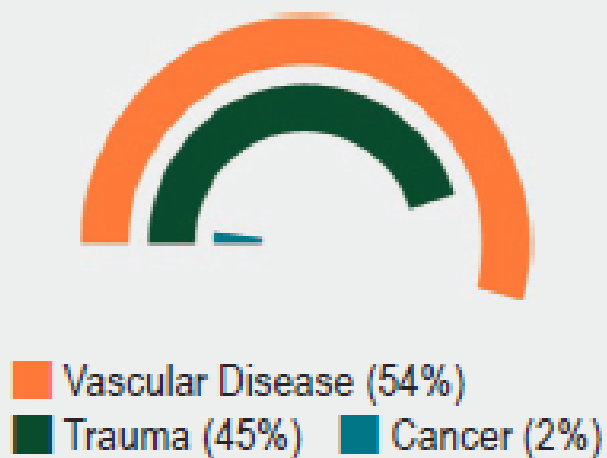
Limb Loss in the U.S.



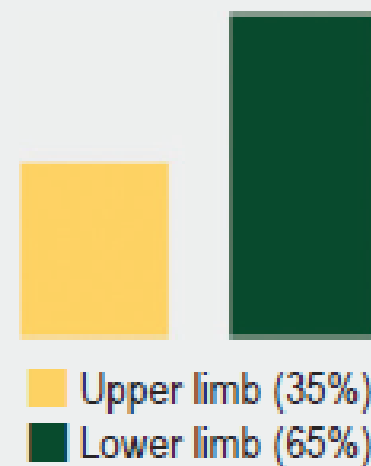


Limb Loss Prevalence

Causes of Amputation



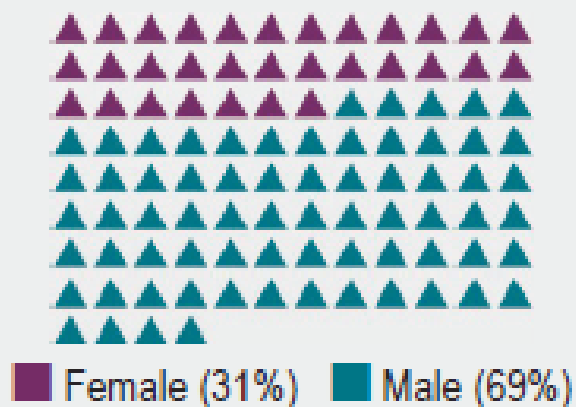
Types of Amputations



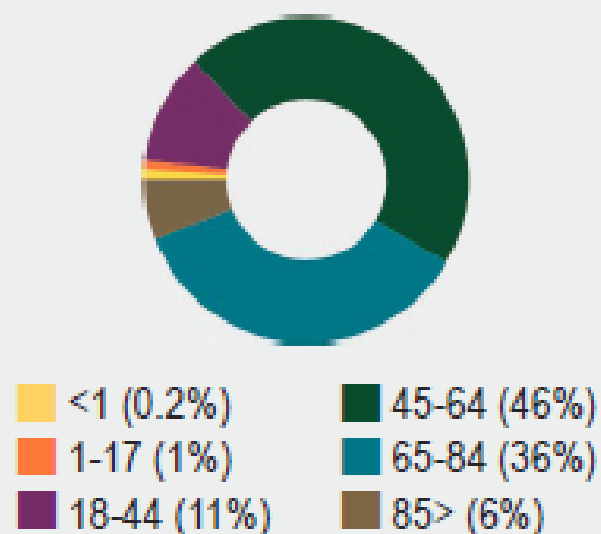


Limb Loss Incidence

Gender of Amputation Patients, 2014



Age at Amputation, 2014





Other Limb Loss Facts

Lifetime healthcare costs for people with limb loss is \$509,275 compared to \$361,200 for people without limb loss.



Hospital charges for patients who underwent an amputation totaled \$10 billion in 2014.



African Americans are 4 times more likely to have an amputation than White Americans.



Social Workers should know...

- * 3.6 million people will be living with limb loss by 2050.
- * 36% of people living with limb loss experience depression.
- * 85% of lower-limb amputations are preceded by a foot ulcer.
- * Only since 2018 has CT insurance policies started providing the same coverage as Medicare



Herb's (Social Worker) Story



Week before Amputation

- Monday:** Dr. confirms Reoccurrence of Cancer
PT says, “Good! You’ll be better off.”
- Tuesday:** 1st and only visit by VNA’s Social Worker
- Wednesday:** Social Worker calls back * **Pivotal** *
- Thursday:** Visit to Amputee Support Group Meeting
- Following Tuesday:** Amputation



Amputee Support Group Meeting

- * Attendees arrive in street clothes
- * Except for facilitators, ALL were amputees!
- * ALL had resumed their normal life
- * **The Big Take-away: Believability** that I would walk again and resume my normal life. (If they could do it, so could I.)



Keys for Post-Amputation Success

Research studies show there are two key indicators for post-amputation success:

- 1) Amputee Peer Visits**
- 2) Amputee Support Groups**



Certified Amputee Peer Visitors

- * **Certified by Amputee Coalition** following completion of 8-hour intensive training, background check and references
- * Available for patients **and** family members (Caretaker Peer Visitor)
- * **Most effective when patient is ready**
- * **YNHH Volunteer** training and immunizations
- * **Healthcare workers should know the YNHH process** for requesting a peer visit

A close-up photograph of a person's arm and hand. The person is wearing a white t-shirt and a black prosthetic arm. They are holding a light-colored folder or book. The background is blurred.

Certified Amputee Peer Visits

- * **Powerful** to see an amputee walking, who has resumed a “new normal” life
- * **Improves self-expectations** and ability to imagine the future; provides a roadmap for the journey ahead
- * **Gets answers** from someone with similar experience
- * **Helps family** to understand what to expect

A man with a prosthetic leg is working in a wood shop. He is wearing a plaid shirt and grey overalls, and is holding a long wooden plank. He is standing on a yellow line on the floor. In the background, there are stacks of wood and industrial equipment.

Amputee Support Groups

- * Provides interaction with peers
- * Presentations about new equipment and techniques
- * **As patient**, able to ask questions from people who have “been there”
- * **As an amputee** who has returned to a full productive life, able to help others answer questions

- ▶ **Information Sheets and research studies** available and downloadable online
- ▶ **Peer Visitor** information
- ▶ **Connecticut Amputee Support Group** information and meeting locations


[HOME](#)
[NEWS](#)
[RESEARCH](#)
[CAN PUBLICATIONS](#)
[MEDIA](#)
[CONTACT](#)
[RESOURCES](#)

CTAmputeeNetwork.org



Founded By Amputees For Amputees

Connecticut Amputee Network welcomes you. As amputees ourselves, we know that people with limb loss/limb change share issues and concerns that need to be addressed. We created this organization, CAN, to join people with limb loss/limb change, their loved ones, caretakers, educators, and medical professionals to work



Connecticut Amput...

126 likes

Liked

Share

You and 7 other friends like this

- ▶ CT Amputee Support Group schedules
- ▶ Private discussion group for amputees
- ▶ Links to news and information for amputees
- ▶ Action alerts for advocacy efforts

Connecticut Amputee Network
@CTamputeenetwork

Home
About
Events
Photos
Community
Groups
Reviews
Posts

Create a Page

This is what your Page looks like to a visitor. [Switch back to your view](#) to manage this Page.

Liked Following Share ...

Write a post...

Photo/Video Tag Friends Check in ...

Upcoming Events

Sign Up Send Message

No Rating Yet

CAN: For Amputees By Amputees

www.facebook.com/CTamputeenetwork/

A photograph of a person with a prosthetic leg surfing on a wave. The person is wearing a black shirt and pink shorts, and is crouching on a black surfboard. The background shows a blue ocean with white waves under a cloudy sky. The image is split into three vertical panels: the left and right panels show the original photo, while the middle panel is a solid blue color with white text.

Q&A

How Can We Help?

Herb Kolodny
Brenda Novak



Thank You

Herb Kolodny
Brenda Novak



herb@CTAmputeeNetwork.org
brenda@CTAmputeeNetwork.org



<http://www.CTAmputeeNetwork.org>