



Patient & Family Guide
2016

Angiogram



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Angiogram

An angiogram is a special X-ray test. A colourless dye will be injected into your blood vessels, so that they can be seen on X-ray.

Your doctor wants to study the blood vessels in your _____.

Where will the angiogram be done?

The test will be done in the Diagnostic Imaging Department at the:

- Halifax Infirmary
- Victoria General

How long will I be at the hospital?

You will have the angiogram in the morning. The actual test will take about 1-2 hours. You will then rest for at least 4 hours before going home.

After the angiogram, you must have someone drive you home and stay with you overnight. You must not drive a car or take public transit. If you live more than 50 km (30 miles) from the hospital, you must stay in the city overnight after the angiogram.

Who will do the angiogram?

A radiologist (a doctor who specializes in X-ray procedures) will do the angiogram.

How do I get ready for the angiogram?

- **Tell your referring doctor if you are pregnant or have any allergies.**
- You may continue taking smoking cessation products.
- You may need to stop taking blood thinners. Please talk about this with your referring doctor. Tell your doctor if you are taking any blood-thinning medications (this may include Aspirin®, clopidogrel, warfarin, heparin, dabigatran, rivaroxaban, or apixaban).
- You will need to have some blood tests during the 2 weeks just before the angiogram. Your referring doctor will arrange for you to have these tests.
- If you are on a blood thinner and it is stopped, you will have to have some bloodwork redrawn a few days before your angiogram to make sure the levels are OK to proceed. There could be a delay on the day of your angiogram to have blood redrawn and checked if not done ahead of time.
- On the evening before the angiogram, you must drink at least 4 eight ounce (4 cups total) glasses of fluid (milk, juice, tea, coffee and/or water). You may continue to drink fluids until the time of the angiogram.

- Do not have any solid food after midnight. Do not eat breakfast. You may have tea or coffee in the morning.
- Do not take insulin or any other medication for diabetes on the morning of the test.
- In the morning, take your other medications with fluids. Do not take Coumadin®. Bring all your medications to the hospital in their original containers (this includes your insulin and diabetes pills).

How is the angiogram done?

- The nurse will shave an area in both groins.
- An intravenous (IV) will be started.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form.
- The area will be covered with sterile towels.
- The radiologist will inject freezing medication into the groin area to numb it.
- A long plastic tube (catheter) will be put in the femoral artery through the groin. The catheter will be moved up the blood vessel until it reaches the area your doctor wants to examine.
- The doctor will inject a dye. You may have a warm feeling when the dye is injected. This will only last a few seconds. The technologist will take a series of X-rays.
- After the X-rays are taken, the doctor will take out the catheter. Pressure will be put on the insertion site for 10 minutes to help prevent any bleeding.

What happens next?

- A nurse will watch you closely for at least 4 hours. The nurse will check your blood pressure, pulse, and groin several times.
- You must not lift your head or bend your affected leg as your puncture site may start to bleed.
 - › **Call your nurse right away if you have any pain, swelling, or bleeding from your groin.**
- Your nurse will continue to check you often. He or she will tell you when you can have your head raised and when you can get up.
- You will get lunch or a snack and drink.
- You will be able to leave the hospital (with someone else, not alone) when your bed rest is finished and you've been told what to expect and do when you go home.
- You will get a list of instructions to follow from the Recovery Room nurse.
- Please note, there are limitations on lifting, bending, and strenuous activities for 3 days after the angiogram. If you are unsure, please ask us.

Unexplained pain or bleeding needs emergency attention. Call your nurse or 911 if you're away from the hospital.

When will I get the results of the test?

Your referring doctor will be able to get the test results on the day after your angiogram. He or she will be sent a written report within 5 days.

If you have any questions about your care:

Speak with a nurse in Minor Procedures Recovery at 902-473-2778.

If you have any questions about your appointment, call the Diagnostic Imaging Department:

Halifax Infirmary: 902-473-5327

Victoria General: 902-473-5477 or 902-473-7785

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your healthcare provider. We are here to help you.

