



Patient & Family Guide

2022

# Fistulogram

Cape Breton Regional  
Hospital



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# Fistulogram

Your doctor has arranged for you to have a special X-ray called a fistulogram. A colourless contrast (X-ray dye) will be injected into your blood vessels using an IV (intravenous line). This dye will help your health care team see your dialysis access (fistula). This is to look for any narrowing(s) in the access.

This test will take about 15 to 30 minutes.

## My appointment

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you cannot keep your appointment, please call the Dialysis Unit right away so that another patient can be booked in your time slot:**

› Phone: 902-567-7817

## **Who will do my fistulogram?**

A doctor who specializes in vascular access will do the test. A nurse and an X-ray technologist will also be in the room.

## **Where do I go for my appointment?**

Please register in the Interventional Radiology (X-ray) Department on the main level 30 minutes before your appointment time.

## **How do I get ready?**

- You may eat and drink as usual.
- Bring your Nova Scotia health card with you.
- If you are pregnant, tell your referring doctor (the doctor who sent you for this test) and the doctor.
- If you are allergic to X-ray dye, tell your referring doctor and the doctor.
- Take your usual medication(s).

## **How is the fistulogram done?**

- The doctor will explain the procedure to you. Then will then ask you to review and sign a consent form. If you have any questions, please ask.
- You will be taken into the X-ray room and asked to lie down on an exam table.
- A small IV needle will be inserted (put in) into your dialysis access.
- A blood pressure cuff will be put on your fistula arm for a short time. This is to help with the test.
- The doctor will inject the dye through your IV. When the dye is injected, you may have a warm feeling. This will only last for a few seconds. The technologist will take a series of X-rays.
- After the X-rays are taken, your IV will be taken out. This will not hurt. Pressure will be placed on the insertion site (where the IV was put in) for 10 minutes. This is to prevent any bleeding.

## **What will happen next?**

- After the test, you will be able to go home or to the Dialysis Unit. Staff will tell you where to go.
- You may eat and drink as usual.
- You can return to your usual activities on the day after the test. You do not need to take a day off of work or school for this test.

## **What are the possible risks and complications?**

The risks of this test can include, but are not limited to:

### **Common:**

- › Mild pain, bruising and/or infection from the IV needle insertion site

### **Less common:**

- › Allergic reaction to the X-ray dye

## **Signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction:**

- › Rash
- › Hives
- › Itching
- › Fainting
- › Nausea (upset stomach)
- › Shortness of breath (trouble breathing)

Your health care team may give you medication to help with a possible allergic reaction.

**The X-ray dye we use is very safe. Serious reactions during or after a fistulogram are very rare.**

All X-ray tests have some exposure to radiation. The amount of radiation depends on the test. The length of time and amount of radiation exposure are strictly controlled and kept as low as possible.

## **When will I get the results?**

The results of your test will be available within a couple of days. Your nephrologist (kidney doctor) or primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) will talk about the results with you.

**Call your primary health care provider or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have any of the following:**

- › Pain that is getting worse
- › Swelling at or near your injection site
- › Bleeding from your fistula or graft (artificial tube)

**Looking for more health information?**

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

*Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.*

*Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

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The information in this pamphlet is for informational and educational purposes only.

The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.