



Patient & Family Guide

2022

Fistuloplasty

Cape Breton Regional
Hospital



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Fistuloplasty

What is a fistuloplasty?

A fistuloplasty is a non-surgical procedure used to open a blocked or narrowed blood vessel in your fistula. The blood vessel is stretched with a special balloon.

Who will do my fistuloplasty?

A doctor who specializes in vascular access will do your fistuloplasty.

Where do I go for my appointment?

- Please register in the Day Surgery Department on the main level 1½ hours before your appointment time.
- **If it is urgent, go directly to the Renal Dialysis Unit. Dialysis staff will tell you where to go to register.**

How long will I be at the hospital?

- Please plan to be at the hospital for 4 hours for the full appointment.
- The fistuloplasty procedure will take about 1 hour.

- After the procedure, you will stay in the recovery area for about 2 hours.

How do I get ready for my procedure?

- **Do not eat any solid food after midnight the night before your procedure.**
- You may drink clear fluids **only** after midnight.
- Bring your Nova Scotia health card with you.
- Tell your doctor in the Dialysis Unit if you are taking blood thinner medication (like warfarin). You may need to stop taking it a few days before the procedure. They will give you instructions on when to stop taking this medication.
- Several days before your procedure, a nurse will give you written instructions in person (for scheduled appointments). They will tell you if you need to stop taking any other medication(s).
- You will need to have blood tests a few days before the procedure. Your nephrologist (a kidney specialist) or renal nurse practitioner will order these tests for you.
- If you are pregnant, tell the doctor.
- If you are allergic to X-ray contrast (dye), tell the doctor.

On the morning of the procedure:

- **Do not eat breakfast.**
- If you have diabetes, follow the instructions given to you about your insulin or diabetes pills by your nurse.
- Take your medication(s) as usual, **except for blood thinner and/or diabetes medications**, unless told otherwise.
- Bring all of your medication(s) and insulin to the hospital with you.

You must have a responsible adult to take you home by car or taxi. You cannot drive yourself. They must also stay with you overnight after your procedure. This is for your safety.

- **Do not drive for 24 hours (1 day) after your procedure.**

How is the fistuloplasty done?

- The doctor will explain the procedure to you. They will then ask you to review and sign a consent form. A nurse will also ask you a series of questions before your procedure. If you have any questions, please ask.
- You will be asked to change into a hospital gown (johnny shirt).
- You will be taken into the X-ray room and asked to lie down on an exam table.
- An intravenous (IV) will be inserted (put in) into a vein in your arm or hand. We will check your vital signs (breathing, temperature, blood pressure, heart rate, etc.).
- The doctor may give you sedation (medication to help you relax), if needed.
- A small IV needle will be inserted into your dialysis access.
- A blood pressure cuff or tourniquet (tight cord or bandage) will be placed on your fistula arm for a short time. This is to help with the procedure.
- 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. A technologist will take a series of X-rays.

- The radiologist will use the dye to help find the blockage or narrowing in your blood vessel.
- A special tube called a catheter will be passed through a blood vessel in your arm to the blockage. The catheter has a small balloon at the tip.
- Once the catheter has reached the blockage, the balloon will be inflated (made bigger) and deflated (made smaller) several times. This will stretch the blood vessel and should help the blockage.

What will happen after the procedure?

- You will stay in the recovery area for about 2 hours. A nurse will check your blood pressure, heart rate, and puncture site (where the IV was inserted) often.
- You may eat and drink as usual.
- You may have a stitch at the puncture site to help prevent bleeding. A dialysis nurse will remove the stitch the next time you come for dialysis. Ask the dialysis nurse about removing the stitch.
- There will be a small clear dressing or bandage over the puncture site.
- The nurse will show you how to apply pressure to the puncture site if it bleeds at home.

What are the possible risks?

The risks of a fistuloplasty include, but are not limited to:

Common:

- › Bleeding
- › Mild pain
- › Bruising and/or infection at the puncture site

Less common:

- › Loss of the fistula
- › 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 fistuloplasty are very rare.

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

Call your primary health care provider or 811 if you have:

- › A lot of bruising and/or swelling at the puncture site or in your fistula arm
- › A lot of pain at the puncture site
- › Fever
(temperature above 38° C/100.4° F)
- › Chills
- › Trouble feeling the thrill or buzz in your fistula arm
- › A lump, pus, or a bad smell at the puncture site

**Call 911 or go to the nearest
Emergency Department right away if
you have:**

- › Bleeding at the puncture site that does not stop
- › A change in the colour of your arm
- › Chest pain or trouble breathing

**What are your questions?
Please ask. We are here to help you.**

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.