

Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

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

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Learn more: <https://library.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources>

Fistulogram

My appointment:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

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

Phone: _____

When will I get the results?

- The results of your test will be available the next day.
- Your nephrologist (kidney doctor) or nurse practitioner will talk with you about the results.

Call your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) if you have:

- › Pain that is getting worse
- › More or abnormal swelling at or near the insertion site after your test
- › Bleeding from your fistula or graft

If you cannot reach your primary health care provider, call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.

What are the risks of this test?

The risks can include, but are not limited to:

Common risks:

- › Mild pain, bruising, or infection where your I.V. was put in

Less common risks:

- › Allergic reaction to the X-ray dye

Signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction:

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

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

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

- All X-rays expose you to some radiation. The amount of radiation depends on the test. We control the amount and length of radiation exposure and keep it as low as possible.

Fistulogram

What is a fistulogram?

- A fistulogram is a test that uses an X-ray to show narrowing in your dialysis access (fistula or graft).

How is the test done?

- X-ray dye (called a **colourless contrast**) is injected (put) into your blood vessels through an intravenous (I.V.) in your dialysis access. The dye will help your health care team see your fistula or graft.
- The test takes about 15 to 30 minutes.

Who will do the test?

- An interventional radiologist (doctor who specializes in X-rays) will do the test.
- A nurse and an X-ray technologist will also be in the room.

Where is the test done?

- ☐ Halifax
 - › Dickson Building, Victoria General site, QE II
- ☐ Kentville
 - › Valley Regional Hospital
- ☐ Sydney
 - › Cape Breton Regional Hospital

Please arrive 30 minutes before your appointment time.

How do I get ready for this test?

- You may eat and drink as usual.
- Take your usual medication(s).
- **Tell your referring doctor (the doctor who sent you for this test) and the radiologist if:**
 - › You are pregnant
 - › You are allergic to X-ray dye
- **Bring your provincial health card with you.**

What will happen during the test?

- The radiologist will explain the test. They will then ask you to review and sign a consent form. If you have any questions, please ask.
- You will be taken to the X-ray room and asked to lie on the table.
- We will insert (put in) a small I.V. needle into your fistula or graft. This is called the **insertion site**.
- We will put a blood pressure cuff on your fistula arm for a short time to help with the test.
- The radiologist will inject X-ray dye through your I.V. You may have a warm feeling for a few seconds.
- The technologist will take X-rays.
- Then we will take out your I.V. This will not hurt. The radiologist will put pressure on the insertion site and put on a bandage to prevent bleeding.

What will happen after the test?

- You may eat and drink as usual.
- You can go back to your usual activities on the day after your test.