

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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Fistuloplasty

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: _____

Fistuloplasty

What is a fistuloplasty?

- A fistuloplasty is a non-surgical procedure to open blocked or narrowed blood vessels in your dialysis access (fistula or graft). The blood vessels are stretched with a balloon.

Who will do the procedure?

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

Where is the procedure done?

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

How long will I be at the hospital?

- Please plan to be at the hospital for 4 hours.
- When you are booking your appointment, the booking staff will tell you:
 - › Your appointment time
 - › What time you should arrive at the hospital

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

Call your doctor, go to the nearest Emergency Department, or call 911 if you have:

- › Bleeding at the insertion site that does not stop
- › A lot of bruising and/or swelling at the insertion site or in your fistula arm
- › A lot of pain at the insertion site
- › A change in the colour of your arm
- › Fever (temperature above 38 °C or 100.4 °F) or chills
- › A lump, pus, or a bad smell at the insertion site
- › Chest pain or trouble breathing

- The nurse will show you how to put pressure on the insertion site if it bleeds at home.
- **Do not drive for 24 hours (1 day) after your procedure.**

What are the risks of this procedure?

The risks can include, but are not limited to:

Common risks:

- › Bleeding from the insertion site
- › Mild pain and/or bruising
- › 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 procedure to help with a possible allergic reaction.
- **The X-ray dye we use is very safe. Serious reactions during or after a fistuloplasty are rare.**

How do I get ready for this procedure?

You must have a responsible adult:

- › Stay in the hospital during your procedure
- › Take you home after your procedure
- › Stay with you overnight

- 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 your procedure. They will tell you when to stop taking this medication.
- You will need to have blood tests a few days before your procedure. Your doctor will order these tests for you.
- A nurse will call you with instructions 1 to 2 days before your procedure. They will tell you if you need to stop taking any medications.
- **Tell your referring doctor (the doctor who sent you for this procedure) and the radiologist if:**
 - › You are pregnant
 - › You are allergic to X-ray dye

The night before your procedure

- **Do not** eat any solid food after midnight.
- You may drink clear fluids after midnight.

The morning of your procedure

- **Do not** eat breakfast.
- Take your medications as usual, **except for blood thinners**.
- **If you have diabetes**, eat and take your medications as told by your doctor.
- Bring all of your medications (including insulin, prescription and over-the-counter products, inhalers, creams, eye drops, patches, herbal products, vitamins, and supplements) in their original containers with you to the hospital.
- **Bring your provincial health card with you.**

How is the procedure done?

- The doctor will explain the procedure. They will then ask you to review and sign a consent form.
- The procedure is done in the Interventional Radiology (X-ray) Department.
- You will be taken to the X-ray room and asked to lie down on the table.
- The doctor may give you sedation (medication to help you relax).
- We will insert (put in) a small intravenous (I.V.) needle in your fistula or graft. This is called the insertion site.

- We will put a blood pressure cuff or a tourniquet (a tight cord or bandage) on your fistula arm for a short time.
- The doctor will inject the X-ray dye through the I.V. You may have a warm feeling for a few seconds.
- The technologist will take X-rays.
- The radiologist will use the X-ray dye to help find the blockage or narrowing in your blood vessels.
- They will pass a catheter (flexible tube) through a blood vessel in your arm to the blockage. The catheter has a small balloon at the tip. They will inflate (make bigger) and deflate (make smaller) the balloon several times. This will stretch the blood vessel and help to open the blockage.

What will happen after the procedure?

- You will recover at the hospital for about 2 hours. A nurse will check your blood pressure, heart rate, and insertion site often.
- You may eat and drink as usual.
- You may have a stitch at the insertion site to help prevent bleeding. There will be a small, clear dressing or bandage over the puncture site. A dialysis nurse will remove the stitch the next time you come for dialysis.