

## **What is an angiogram?**

An angiogram is an imaging study of a blood vessel. Since the blood vessels are not normally seen on x-rays, we use contrast agents to help.

### **Common reasons for an angiogram:**

Many types of diseases are diagnosed with angiograms. Some are even treated the same day. This procedure can identify blood clots, narrow or occluded vessels, malformations, or any other vascular abnormality. Occasionally, some types of blockages may be fixed during the procedure. This is called angioplasty. A stent may also be placed. Indications for angioplasty or stents may be discussed at the time of your exam or at a later visit with your doctor, depending on each individual case.

### **Patient Preparation:**

Your doctor's office will need to schedule your exam. The day before your angiogram, you will be contacted twice: once for registration, and once for health information. Our Same Day Services Unit (SDS) will contact you to give you your time to be here and to obtain medical history to include history and medications.

**Inform your doctor if you have a known allergy to iodine or contrast material/dye or if you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant. If you have a known allergy to iodine or contrast material, it is necessary to pick up a prep kit in the Radiology Department at least one day in advance.**

We ask that certain medications be held before the day of the test. Metformin (Glucophage, Avandamet, or Glucophage) and Warfarin (Coumadin) should be held for 2 days. Aspirin, Plavix, Ticlid, and Persantine should be held for 4 days prior unless you have had a recent stent placed. If your not sure, ask your doctor. We also ask that you bring any related x-ray reports or films with you. Finally, we ask that you only have clear liquids 4 hours before your test.

## **What to expect:**

First you will be asked to report to SDS on the 1st floor. There, you will be asked to put on a gown, have lab work drawn, and an IV started. We will need to wait for the results of the lab work. Next, you will go to the radiology department. We will place you on a monitor and check the pulses in your arms and legs. A surgical blanket will cover you. Your skin will be shaved, cleaned and numbed where the catheter will be placed. The doctor will use a small tube called a catheter to access your artery. When x-ray contrast is injected, you may feel warm or even hot. This is normal, and it will pass quickly. This may be done several times, until the exam is complete.

### **After the exam:**

When we remove the catheter, we will need to hold firm pressure for 5 to 15 minutes. This is to prevent bleeding. 4-6 hours of bed rest will also be necessary. During that time, you will be able to visit with family, eat, watch TV, etc.

**Risks:**

There are few risks. The biggest risks are damage to the vessels and bleeding. Some bruising at the site can be normal, but the area should be soft. There is a small chance that an allergic reaction to the contrast material may occur. Reactions range from hives to, very rarely, severe shock and even death.

**Report/Results:**

A Radiologist, a physician experienced in angiograms and other radiology exams, will interpret the exam, if done by the radiologist. A report will be available to physicians within 24 hours on routine exams. A signed report with the interpretation will also be sent to the healthcare provider that ordered the test. If a physician other than a radiologist performs the exam, it may take a little longer. You may check with your ordering physician for the report.



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# Angiograms Arteriograms

A Patient's Guide to  
Radiological Exams

