

Having an Angiogram

Patient Information

Cardiac Catheter Laboratory

Author ID: CW/JS
Leaflet Number: Card 005
Version: 7
Name of Leaflet: Having an Angiogram
Last reviewed: August 2020
Next Review Date: August 2022

Cardiac Catheterisation

Is an x-ray test, which will provide vital information about the condition inside your heart and how well the pumping chambers and valves are working. Most importantly, it can show if there is any narrowing in the coronary arteries. This diagnostic test will be used to plan the best treatment for you: medical treatment, bypass surgery, angioplasty and stent.

Cardiac catheterisation is a routine, safe procedure but, like all surgical procedures it is associated with a small risk of complications and it is therefore, necessary that you are fully informed of this – you may get a bruise at the puncture site, rarely damage to the artery can occur that requires repair. Heart rhythm disturbances can occur. Deep vein thrombosis, heart attack, stroke and death are known complications but these are extremely rare.

Before your angiogram

Please make arrangements for your transport to and from the hospital prior to the day of your test.

Patients who take Warfarin, Synthrome or a direct oral anti-coagulant such as Rivaroxaban (Xarelto), Edoxaban (Lixiana), Apixaban (Eliquis) or Dabigatran (Pradaxa) need to follow specific instructions given at the pre-admission clinic. **DO NOT STOP TAKING ANY OF THESE MEDICATIONS UNLESS YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS TO DO SO.** If you are in any doubt, contact the Cardiac Catheter Laboratory on 01942 773392.

- If the procedure is from your right groin, please shave this the night before.
- You will be welcomed onto the unit by a nurse who will check your details are correct. The nurse will also record your blood pressure and pulse.
- A gown and paper pants will be provided for the procedure.
- One of the Doctors will see you and explain the procedure to you and ask you to sign a consent form.
- When it is time for your angiogram a member of the team will escort you to the catheter laboratory.

Your Angiogram

You will be lying down for this test and awake throughout this procedure and asked to lie flat and keep as still as possible. Initially some ECG electrodes will be attached to your chest to record your heart rhythm. Depending on the Cardiologist he/she will use the right groin, right arm or right wrist as the approach route to your heart. This area will be cleaned with some iodine –this will feel cold.

You will be covered with a sterile drape and the procedure will be carried out under local anaesthetic, which is used to freeze the skin. After a few minutes the area will be numb and the test can be started. The Doctor introduces a fine flexible tube into the blood vessel, this should not be painful, but you may feel some pressure. A fine catheter will be passed through the tube and dye will be injected to outline the coronary arteries to assess the severity of any narrowing and to assess the pumping action of the heart.

On the assessment of the heart's pumping action you will feel warm as the dye is injected, some patients feel as if they have wet themselves this is only a feeling and will pass quickly.

If the tube has been introduced from your right groin it may be possible at the end of the procedure to seal the opening in your artery by a special device called an angioseal. Alternatively you will be taken to the recovery area where the tube in the circulation will be removed. Pressure will be applied to stop any bleeding that may occur and to seal off the opening of the artery by natural means, which is by formation of a clot.

After your Angiogram

You will be taken to the recovery area where you may be asked to remain flat. During this time your blood pressure and catheter site will be checked regularly. The Doctor who carried out your angiogram will come and see you on the ward and discuss the results with you. Arrangements will be made for you to see the Consultant in Clinic or you may be referred for a balloon angioplasty/stent or heart surgery. You will be allowed home with your escort once the doctor has seen you.

At Home

- You must have somebody at home with you on the first night of your angiogram. This is in case you need any help in the night or you have any problems.
- For the 48 hours following the procedure, we advise you to rest. Do not do anything strenuous i.e. Lifting or hoovering.
- Do not have a bath or shower on the evening of your angiogram - leave it to the following day.
- You may eat as normal.
- If you are taking Warfarin or a direct oral anti-coagulant you may re-start that evening unless the doctor tells you otherwise.
- If you take Metformin do not take it until two days after the procedure unless otherwise instructed.
- Do not drive for 48 hours after your angiogram.
- You may get some slight bruising around the puncture site; this is acceptable as long as it is not swollen or painful.

- If there is any bleeding from the puncture site you need to apply pressure to the area and telephone immediately for an ambulance which will take you to the nearest casualty department.
- The same applies if you get a large swelling or a lot of pain at the puncture site.
- After 48 hours you can slowly resume your normal activities.

Contact Numbers

Cardiac Catheter Laboratory

01942 773392 or 01942 773394

Please use this space to write notes / reminders.

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan WN1 2NN

Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use and store the information we hold about you, please take a look at our “how we use your information” leaflet which can be found on the Trust website: https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient_information/leaflets/

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille and other languages upon request. For more information please ask in the department/ward.

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