

Care Gram

Myelogram

Date of Test: _____ Test Time: _____

Welcome

Welcome to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Radiology Department. Your doctor has requested a Myelogram. A Myelogram is an X-ray that uses a contrast medicine to look at the spinal cord and the space around it (called subarachnoid space). The test is performed by a radiologist, a doctor specialized in medical diagnosis by X-ray; and a radiographer, a person certified in the use of X-ray equipment.

How the Test Works

The contrast medicine is put in the subarachnoid space around the spine. The table that you will be on will be tilted. This will help the contrast flow up and down the spine. X-rays are taken while the contrast flows through the spine. The contrast helps the radiologist see areas that cannot be seen with regular X-rays, CT scan, or MRI. Following the Myelogram, you will be taken to Cat Scan (CT) for additional imaging.

Common uses for the test:

- To find a herniated or ruptured disk (slipped disk)
- To find out if surgery is needed
- To see bone spurs in people with spinal arthritis
- To find spinal stenosis (a narrow spinal cord)
- To show tumors
- To find cancer and decide the best treatment
- To show infection, inflammation, abnormal blood vessels, and traumatic (painful) injuries

Allowing Time

The test takes about 30 to 60 minutes. If you have other tests scheduled, you may be there longer. Plan on staying in the Hospital after your test for 4 hours or longer for observation and recovery.

Registering

Please report to the Outpatient Surgery Department on the second floor of LMH. Come to this area 90 minutes before your planned test time.

Preparation

1. Please bring a current list of medicines with you on the day of your procedure.
2. If you are taking blood thinning medicines, you must consult with your doctor about stopping use of these drugs prior to your myelogram.



**Licking Memorial
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1616-0516
03/31/2011
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3. On the day of your test, take your other medicines with no more than 4 ounces of water unless your doctor tells you not to take them.

Your Role

1. Relax during the test. It is important to be still and hold your breath when asked.
2. Any woman who is pregnant or thinks she might be pregnant should let the doctor know before the test.

During a Myelogram

- The test will be done in the Radiology Department. The radiologist will obtain a signed consent. After the test, you will go back to the Outpatient Surgery area for your recovery time.
- You will be asked to change into a gown and robe. You will be laying face down on the table. The radiologist chooses the best place for the needle and cleans the skin around that area.
- A local numbing medicine (anesthetic) is injected at the site and you may feel a sting. The spinal needle is put in and you may feel pressure.
- Special medicine called a contrast agent will be put through the needle into the spine.
- Please let the radiographer know if you feel pain in your head, back, or legs.

After the Test

- The needle is removed from your back and a small bandage is applied.
- You will need to sit at a 45 degree angle while you recover. It is a good idea to drink fluids during this time.
- You will need to have someone drive you home from the Hospital. It would be best if that person could also stay with you through the night.
- The contrast agent will come out through your urine and should not discolor your urine or bowel movements.
- For 1 to 2 days, do not bend over or do hard physical work or play.

After you go home, call your doctor if you have:

- Fever higher than 100.4 F
- Nausea and vomiting (feel sick to your stomach)
- Bad headaches for more than 24 hours
- Neck stiffness
- Numbness in your legs
- Problems going to the bathroom

Finding Out the Results

The radiologist will study your test and give the findings to your doctor. Your doctor should receive the report 24 – 48 hours after your test. Your doctor will talk to you about the results and your options.

Reminder

If you have any questions about your test, please call (740) 348-4710.

- **90 minutes before your test, go to the Outpatient Surgery Department – on the second floor of the Hospital.**