

Care Gram

Angiogram

Date of Test: _____ **Test Time:** _____

Welcome

Welcome to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Surgical Services Department. Your doctor has requested that you receive an angiogram. An angiogram is a test used to look at your blood vessels. The test is done by a doctor with special training in the use of images (radiologist), heart (cardiologist) or blood vessel surgery (vascular surgeon). Nurses and radiographers with special training in this area will assist the doctor. The doctor and the assistants wear special gowns, gloves, and masks to help prevent infection.

How the Test Works

The body area for the test is numbed with a medicine called Lidocaine. You will feel touch and pressure, but it should not be painful. After the area is numb, a needle is placed in your artery. A guide wire is passed through the needle and into the blood vessels to be studied. A small catheter then is placed over the guide wire, which is then removed. Through the small catheter, the contrast agent or “dye” is injected. This dye makes the blood vessels clearer for the X-rays. X-rays are taken as the contrast agent travels through your blood vessels.

Allowing Time

The test usually takes 1 to 1½ hours. You will need to stay in the Hospital for 3 to 7 hours to recover after your test.

Preparation

When the test is ordered:

- Ask your doctor if and when you need to stop taking any herbs or medicines such as aspirin, coumadin, lovenox, heparin, plavix, St. John’s Wort, etc.
- Make arrangements for someone to drive you home and stay with you until the next morning.

Day before the test:

- Do not eat or drink after midnight.
- You may be given a special soap to be used the night before and the morning of your test. Follow directions as provided.



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Day of the test:

- Take your medicines with no more than 4 ounces of water unless your doctor tells you otherwise.

Your Role

1. Relax during the test. It is important to be still and hold your breath when asked. Remaining still helps create clear images and pictures.
2. Please tell the registered nurse or radiographer if you have a history of kidney disease, or if you take a diabetic medicine by mouth, or a blood thinning medication.
3. If you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant, inform your doctor before the test begins.

Registering

A couple of days before your scheduled angiogram, your doctor's office may set up a time for you to go to the preadmission testing area at the Hospital. At this time, you will have lab tests done and you will be told about the angiogram. On the morning of your angiogram, you will need to go to the second floor of the John and Mary Alford Surgery Pavilion at least 2 hours before your scheduled time.

During the Angiogram

You will be asked to remove your clothing and wear a gown. A nurse will start an IV to give you fluid and medication. The nurse also will listen to your heartbeat and lung sounds and ask you questions about your health history, current symptoms, and other problems.

The nurse or radiographer then will check the femoral artery pulses located in your groin area. This is the most common artery used for the test. If this artery is not able to be used, a blood vessel in your arm may be used. These areas are cleaned and the hair clipped. The radiologist, vascular surgeon, or cardiologist will explain the test, risks, and possible complications. You will need to sign a consent form.

You will be helped onto a special table. Your heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing will be monitored.

Your groin area will be washed with an antibacterial cleanser called Chloraprep. Sterile drapes will be placed to prevent the risk of infection. The lights in the room will go on and off at various times during the test.

A special substance called a contrast agent will be injected through the blood vessel. The injection may make you feel warm and flushed, produce a metallic taste in your mouth, and make you feel like you need to urinate. These are normal symptoms caused by the contrast agent, and they will last only 1 or 2 minutes. Please let the radiographer know if you begin to itch, feel short of breath, have problems swallowing, or are uncomfortable.

After the Test

The small plastic catheter is removed from your blood vessel. The staff will apply direct pressure to the puncture site for about 15 minutes or use a sealing agent. This will control the bleeding. You will have to stay in bed for 1 to 7 hours with the affected leg straight. You will need to have someone drive you home from the Hospital after your test and stay with you until the next morning. The contrast agent will be eliminated through your urine. It should not discolor your urine or bowel movements.

Finding Out the Results

The radiologist, vascular surgeon, or cardiologist may discuss the findings of your test with you right after the test. They will study your test and give the findings to your doctor. Your doctor will talk to you about the results and your options. Your doctor's office will schedule you for any other tests as needed.

Reminder

If you have any questions about your test, please call (220) 564-7247.