Cisternography Scan

About the test

This test is done to look at the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) that is in and around your brain and spinal cord. It helps find causes for pressure changes in the fluid or to locate where fluid may be leaking.

You will be given an injection of a radioactive material, called a tracer, that will allow the CSF to be seen during the scan. The tracer will be given as an injection in your lower back, called the lumbar region. The tracer has a very small amount of radioactivity and it will go away naturally on its own.

Images or pictures are taken at 2 hours, 6 hours, and 24 hours after the injection. If your doctor feels more images are needed, you may need to return 2 or 3 days after the injection.

If you are breastfeeding, pregnant, or think you might be, tell the radiologist or technologist before the scan.

To prepare for the test

- **Talk to your doctor about the medicines you take**, including prescription and over the counter medicines, vitamins, minerals, or other herbal supplements.

- **If you are age 50 or older**, you must have blood work done within 30 days of your test.

- **If you take a blood thinner or medicine that thins your blood, talk to your doctor** that prescribes the medicine for you about when to stop taking the medicine before the test. Not talking to your doctor about this could result in your test being cancelled or rescheduled.

- **If you take blood thinner medicines or have a bleeding disorder, you will need blood work on the day of the test.** Please get a lab order from your doctor and arrive 2 hours before your scheduled test time.

- **If you take one of the medicines listed below for a stent or other health problems, stopping these medicines may put you at risk.** Talk to the doctor that prescribes the medicine for you to see if changes are needed before this test. These medicines include:
  - High dose aspirin and products that contain aspirin, such as Aggrenox (aspirin with dipyridamole)
  - Heparin
  - Fragmin (Dalteparin)
  - Innohep (Tinzaparin)
  - Coumadin (Warfarin)
  - Lovenox (Enoxaparin)
  - Pradaxa (Dabigatran)
  - Arixtra (Foundaparinux)
  - Brilinta (Ticagretor)
  - Effient (Prasugrel)
  - Eliquis (Apixaban)
  - Plavix (Clopidogrel)
  - Pletal (Cilostazol)
  - Savaysa (Edoxaban)
  - Ticlid (Ticlopidine)
  - Xarelto (Rivaroxaban)
Day Before and Day of the Test

- **Do not eat or drink anything:**
  - After midnight before the test for a morning appointment time, or
  - For at least 4 hours before the test for an afternoon appointment time.
- You will be able to eat and drink again after the first set of images are taken.
- **Have an adult with you to take you home.** For your safety, you may not drive yourself home, go home alone, or use public transportation.
- **Bring a list of your medicines** with you, including all over the counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- **Bring any medicines you take during the day** so you can take them on schedule.
- **Wear comfortable clothing with no metal zippers or snaps.**

**During the test**

Plan to be at the hospital for at least 8 hours, as several sets of images will be taken. You may want to bring something to read or work on while you wait. You will also need to return the following day. Your doctor will decide if more images are needed.

**1st Appointment**

- The doctor will talk to you and explain the test. You will be asked to sign a consent form before you have the injection of tracer.
- You will be asked to change into a hospital gown.
- You will be placed on a cart on your side. You will be asked to curl up, pulling your knees up towards your chest.
- Your lower back will be cleaned.
- The doctor will inject a numbing medicine.
- The doctor will put a needle into your back between 2 bones of your spine called vertebrae and into the space where the fluid is located.
- The tracer will be injected.
  - If you are being checked for a CSF leak, the doctor may put cotton plugs in your nose just before the injection, which will stay in for 24 hours.
- The needle is then removed and a bandage is placed over the site.
- You will need to lie flat for 1 hour.
- You will then be taken to another room where images will be taken at 2 hours and again at 4 to 6 hours after the injection. Each set of images will take about 30 minutes.
- After the first set of images, you can change back into your clothes. You will be asked to wait in the waiting area, but you can leave to get something to eat or drink.
- You need to be back in time to have the second set of images done at 4 to 6 hours after the injection.
After 1st Appointment

- If you are an outpatient going home, be sure to rest and limit your activity until your appointment the next day.
- Use only 1 pillow under your head when lying down.
- Avoid exercise and lifting, pulling, or pushing anything over 10 pounds. A gallon of milk weighs about 8 pounds.
- Drink fluids, especially water and drinks with caffeine to help avoid headache.
- Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen if you do get a headache.

2nd Appointment

- There is no need to limit food or drink before this appointment.
- Wear comfortable clothes with no metal, zippers, or snaps.
- Expect this appointment to take less than 1 hour.

Your test dates and location

Your 1st appointment is scheduled at ____________________ on ____________________.

Your 2nd appointment is scheduled at ____________________ on ____________________.

Your test is scheduled at:
University Hospital, 410 W. 10th Avenue, Columbus OH 43210
Doan Hall, 2nd floor, Nuclear Medicine, Room 211
Take the Doan Hall elevators to the 2nd floor. Go to Radiology Registration to the right of the elevators.
- If you need to change your appointment, call Radiology Scheduling at (614) 293-4333.
- If you have a question about your test, please call Nuclear Medicine at (614) 293-5774.