Angiogram

About the test
An angiogram is a test of the blood vessels in the body. Using x-rays and a medicine called contrast, pictures of the blood flow in your body will be taken so the doctor can see if there is a problem with the blood vessel.

An angiogram may be done to check:
- Blockage of an artery or vein
- Your vessels for the surgeon before an operation
- For internal bleeding

Important to tell us
- If you are pregnant, or think you might be, tell the radiologist before the test is done.
- If you have an allergy to contrast medicine or iodine, tell the doctor or radiologist.

To prepare for the test
- If you take Glucophage, also called metformin, or any other medicine that has metformin in it such as Fortamet, Glucophage XR, Glumetza, Riomet, Metaglip, Glucovance, Actoplus Met, Avandamet, PrandiMet, and Janumet:
  - Please talk with your doctor about blood sugar control before this test.
  - **Do not** take this medicine on the day of the test or surgery.
  - **Do not** take this medicine for 2 days after your test or surgery. Restart this medicine on the third day after your test or surgery.
- If you take blood thinners such as warfarin (Coumadin, Jantoven), talk to your doctor. You may need to stop or change some of these medicines for several days before the test to prevent problems.
- Ask your doctor if you should adjust any of the other medicines you are taking before this test.
- Blood work will be drawn before the day of your test or the morning of your test.
- **Do not eat or drink anything after midnight before your test.** If you have morning medicines such as pain medicines to take, you may have a small sip of water to take your pills.
- Bring your medicines with you if you are an outpatient. You will need to be at the hospital for about 5 to 7 hours.
- You need someone to drive you home after the test that should arrive with you before the test.
- You will need to rest for 24 hours after your test. We recommend someone stay with you during this time. You will be on bed rest 2 to 6 hours after this test.
During the test

You will lie on your back on a firm table. A small area of either your upper leg, groin, or upper arm will be cleaned. A sterile drape will be placed over the area to keep it clean. A numbing medicine will be injected under the skin in the area.

The interventional radiologist, a doctor who specializes in this type of radiology, will then insert a long, narrow tube called a catheter into the blood vessel. A medicine called contrast, which allows blood vessels to be seen with x-rays, will be injected through the catheter. For a few seconds as the contrast is being injected, you may:

- Feel warm
- Have a metallic taste in your mouth
- Feel the need to go to the bathroom

A series of x-rays will be taken with a high speed camera. The room may get noisy for a few seconds and the lights may turn on and off because of the camera. The injection and filming may be repeated several times to show different blood vessels.

The catheter will be removed and the radiologist will either place a vascular closure device into the puncture site or someone will hold pressure on the site for about 10 to 15 minutes to prevent bleeding. You will then be taken to the recovery area for about 30 minutes.

The length of this test will vary based on the blood vessels tested, but it often takes 1 to 2 hours. The staff will try to make you as comfortable as possible, but please let us know if you have discomfort.

The radiologist will study your x-rays very carefully and send a final report to your doctor.

After the test

Care While at the Hospital

You will be monitored for 2 to 6 hours in the Post Procedure Recovery Unit before you go home. Your blood pressure, heart rate, breathing, and oxygen rate will be checked, as well as your puncture site. Lie quietly with your leg or arm straight.

Home Care After Outpatient Angiogram

- A friend or family member must drive you home without making stops along the way. Someone should also stay with you while you rest until the next morning.
- Limit your activity after this test to help your recovery and prevent problems.
- Get up only to use the bathroom and eat.
- If the leg site was used, climbs stairs only one step at a time, favoring the affected leg.
- Slowly increase your activity the next morning, but do not plan to work the day after your test.
- Do not drive for 24 hours.
- Do not lift any objects weighing more than 8 to 10 pounds for 48 hours from the time you leave the hospital. A gallon of milk weighs just over 8 pounds.
- If the catheter was in your leg, limit bending at the waist for 48 hours.
• If you want to clean up after the angiogram, take a sponge bath. Wait until the next morning to shower. Do not take a tub bath until the groin site has completely healed.

• Remove your band-aide the morning after the test. As you shower or bathe, wash the puncture site gently and pat it dry. Do not scrub the site.

• If you feel that you are going to cough, sneeze, or if you need to bear down for a bowel movement, apply gentle pressure to the puncture site with your hand.

**Possible problems after the test**

If you have any problems after the test, call the hospital operator at 614-293-8000 and ask for the interventional radiology resident on call.

**Bleeding**

• Bleeding can occur from the area where the puncture was done. Blood may spurt or drip from the site or it may form a lump called a hematoma or “goose-egg” under the skin.

• **If bleeding occurs**: Lie down on your back as flat as possible. Have someone apply firm pressure with a gauze pad or a clean wash cloth to the puncture site for 10 to 15 minutes or until the bleeding has stopped.

• After bleeding has stopped, continue to lie flat with your arm or leg straight for 60 minutes. When you get up, sit up first. Then move slowly to stand to keep from feeling light-headed.

• **If bleeding occurs a second time**: Reapply pressure for 10 to 15 minutes. Lie flat for one hour. If bleeding is not stopped, call 911 or the Emergency Squad.

**Blood clot forms**

• Clots can block circulation in your leg or arm causing numbness, coldness and / or pain in your arm.

**Infection**

• Signs of infection include: fever above 101 degrees F or 38 degrees C, swelling, warmth, redness, pain or drainage from the puncture site.

**Questions or concerns**

If you have questions or concerns, please call the Interventional Radiology outpatient office at 614-293-2773 between the hours of 8 am and 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. After hours and weekends, call the hospital operator at 614-293-8000 and ask for the interventional radiology resident on call.

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**Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at **614-293-3707** or e-mail **health-info@osu.edu**.

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