About the test
This is an x-ray test to look inside your dialysis access, whether it is a fistula or shunt. It is used to find imperfections or narrowing in the access or the blood vessels leaving the access. Your instructions and time needed for recovery will change depending on if it is placed in the groin or leg area. No preparation for the test is needed.

Important to tell us
• If you are pregnant or think you might be, tell the radiologist before the test is done.
• If you are allergic to contrast or iodine, let your doctor know as soon as possible.

Day of the test
• Please arrive 20 minutes before your appointment time.
• Bring with you a list of your current medicines, your insurance card, and a photo ID.

During the test
• The length of this test will vary, but expect it to take 1 to 2 hours. The staff will try to make you as comfortable as possible. Please let staff know if you have discomfort.
• A staff member will help you onto the table and you will lie on your back. An area of your arm around the access site is cleaned. Sterile towels are placed over the area to keep it clean.
• A local anesthetic (numbing medicine) is injected under the skin in the area.
• The interventional radiologist, a doctor specially trained for this type of test, inserts a long, narrow tube called a catheter into position in the blood vessel. A special medicine called contrast is injected through the catheter so the blood vessels can be seen on the x-rays. You may feel very warm for a few seconds as the contrast medicine is injected.
• A series of x-rays are taken with a high speed camera. The room may get noisy for a few seconds because of the camera.
• The injection and x-rays may be repeated several times to show different blood vessels. In some cases, the radiologist will use a balloon catheter to open narrowing in the blood vessels around the fistula or shunt.
• At the end of the test, the catheter will be removed. The technologist or nurse will hold pressure on the area where the catheter was inserted to prevent bleeding.
• The radiologist will study your x-rays very carefully and send a final report to your doctor.
After the tests

- You will be taken to the Ambulatory Surgery Unit (ASU) to be checked for 2 to 4 hours before you go home. Lie quietly with your arm straight. You should avoid using your arm too much for the rest of the day.
- If you are a patient who needs dialysis, your test will be scheduled on a dialysis day to help your body get rid of the contrast. Do not increase your water intake after the test because this may cause fluid to build up.
- 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 until the morning after this test to help your recovery and prevent problems. Get up only to use the bathroom and eat the first evening.
- Slowly increase your activities the next morning, but do not plan on working the day after your test.
- Do not drive for 24 hours.
- Do not climb stairs or lift objects weighing more than 10 pounds for 48 hours from the time you leave the hospital. A gallon of milk weighs about 10 pounds.
- If you want to clean up after this test, take a sponge bath. Wait until the next morning to shower or take a tub bath.
- 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.

When to call your doctor

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. This includes:

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 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 go to the nearest emergency room.

Feeling of numbness, coldness, or pain in your arm

Blood clots can form and block circulation in your arm causing numbness, coldness, and or pain in your arm.

Infection

Signs of infection include: fever above 100 degrees F, swelling, warmth, redness, pain or drainage from the puncture site.
Tobacco use

If you smoke or use tobacco, stop to protect your health and the health of those around you.

People who smoke have twice the risk of early death from heart attack. Nicotine narrows the blood vessels causing an increase in blood pressure and heart rate. Carbon monoxide competes with oxygen in the red blood cells so there is less oxygen carried to the heart.

Plan to stop smoking:

- Become aware of your smoking habits.
- Stop smoking one day at a time.
- Plan other activities to replace smoking, like taking a walk or chewing gum.
- Ask a friend to quit with you.
- Figure out what causes or triggers you to smoke.

For support and classes for smoking cessation, call:

- Ohio Quits at 1-800-Quit-Now or 1-800-784-8669.
- American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.
- American Heart Association – Check your local phone book for the office near you.
- American Lung Association at 1-866-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872).

Dr. ______________________________ did your test.

If you are unable to reach your doctor, call:

1. The Hospital Operator at (614) 293-8000. Ask for the Interventional Radiology Resident on call.
2. The OSU Emergency Department at (614) 293-8333. If you are not able to contact a doctor, call 911.

Call your doctor’s office for a follow-up appointment: ______________.