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Radiology Services

## Angiogram/Aortogram/Arteriogram

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### Understanding Your Angiogram

Angiogram, aortogram and arteriogram are interchangeable terms. *Angiogram* is the general term for pictures taken of any vessel. An *aortogram* is a picture of the aorta (the main artery from the heart), and an *arteriogram* is a picture of the arteries. The exam, requested by your doctor, will help him or her make the proper diagnosis and plan the best treatment for you.

We hope this sheet will answer common questions you may have about this procedure.

### How do I prepare for this exam?

If you are already a patient in the hospital, your nurse will prepare you according to orders from the radiologist and/or special procedures technologist.

If you are an outpatient, staying overnight or being admitted to the hospital the morning of your angiogram, you will receive the following or similar instructions from your doctor or nurse:

### Instructions for All Patients Before Sedation

No food, solids or milk products can be consumed within six hours of the procedure. Clear liquids, such as apple juice or water, can be taken up until two hours before the test.

**DO NOT** drink carbonated beverages (such as 7-UP or colas) or anything with caffeine (such as tea or coffee). Cranberry and some grape juices count as a clear liquid. Other juices, especially citrus, contain pulp or solids (such as orange juice) and are not clear liquids.

**If you have diabetes**, follow the same instructions and take your insulin, or contact your doctor for special instructions about your diet up to two hours before the exam.

Unless told otherwise by your doctor or nurse, take your medicines as prescribed. If you take any blood thinner (such as Coumadin), talk to your doctor and get instructions on how to stop taking it (usually 72 hours before the angiogram). Bring all of your medicines with you to the exam.

You may need to have blood tests before your angiogram. If so, they will be performed the day before or the morning of your exam.

If you have an allergy to contrast solution (dye) or iodine, tell your doctor. Be sure to inform the radiologist and X-ray technologist before your angiogram.

If you are pregnant or think you might be, make sure to tell your doctor or the special procedures technologist before having the exam.

If you have any related questions or concerns, call the Radiology Department at (864) 455-7911 and ask to speak to the radiology nurse.

### *If You Are Not in the Hospital:*

When you get to the X-ray Department, a radiology nurse will greet you and do the following:

- Have you sign a form giving the radiologist permission to do the procedure ordered by your doctor
- Ask you about your medical history and the medicines you are taking
- Check your temperature
- Check your blood pressure
- Have you change into a hospital gown
- Start an intravenous (IV) line to give you fluids and medication during the test

### *If You Are in the Hospital:*

Orders will be placed in your chart for your nurse to do the following:

- Have you sign a form giving the radiologist permission to do the procedure ordered by your doctor
- Have you change into a hospital gown
- Shave the area where the catheter will be inserted
- Start an intravenous (IV) line to give you fluids and any medications during the test

Inter-hospital transportation will bring you on a stretcher to the X-ray room for your angiogram.

### What happens just before the angiogram?

When you are placed on the X-ray table, the special procedures technologist will do the following:

- Connect you to an EKG monitor
- Take your blood pressure
- Check for pulses in your groin and feet or arm and wrist (depending on the planned site of catheter insertion)
- Shave your groin or arm (if needed)
- Clean the insertion area with antiseptic soap (Betadine)
- Place sterile sheets over your chest, abdomen and legs

The interventional radiologist and the special procedures technologist will wear hats, masks, eye covers and sterile gloves. This covering is for your protection to prevent germs from entering your blood vessels.

### What happens during the angiogram?

- The interventional radiologist will numb the skin where the catheter will be inserted with Xylocaine (similar to the numbing medicine the dentist uses). After the area is numbed, you should not feel any pain but will feel pressure as the catheter is inserted into the artery.
- The catheter is guided through your body to the vessel to be studied. You will not feel the catheter moving through your arteries.
- When the catheter is in place, contrast solution (dye) will be injected through the catheter while X-rays are made. The contrast may give you a warm, flushed feeling for just a few seconds.
- More than one injection of contrast and set of X-rays may be necessary.

Once the interventional radiologist has all of the X-rays needed, the catheter will be removed. There should be no pain when this happens. Pressure will be applied to the site for about 10 minutes. A bandage then will be placed on the entry site.

### What happens after the test?

For six to eight hours ...

- You must remain in bed
- You must keep your bandaged leg straight
- You may elevate your head about 20 to 30 degrees (using the controls of your bed)
- You may roll from side to side for comfort
- You may not sit up
- You may not walk to the bathroom (you must use a urinal or a bedpan)
- You may eat and drink

**NOTE:** If an arterial closure device is used, the recovery is two to four hours and one to two hours of bedrest.

If you have your angiogram performed as an outpatient, you will stay in the hospital for six to eight hours. If you have no complications during this observation period, you will be discharged. You will need to have someone drive for you—you cannot drive yourself. You also must have a responsible adult spend the night with you afterward—you cannot stay alone.

If you are a patient in the hospital, orders will be written for your nurse regarding your specific care and needs after your angiogram.

### How do I get the results?

Once your exam is completed, the radiologist will study your films carefully and prepare a report to discuss with your doctor. Your doctor then will share the results with you.

*We hope you are pleased with the care you receive in the Radiology Department. Our goal is to give you the very best care and attention.*

*For more information or to schedule an angiogram, please call (864) 455-7107 or visit [ghs.org/radiology](http://ghs.org/radiology).*