



Patient & Family Guide
2022

Angiogram



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Angiogram

An angiogram is a special X-ray test. A colourless dye will be injected into your blood vessels. The dye makes your blood vessels show up better on the X-ray.

Your doctor wants to study the blood vessels in your _____.

Where will the angiogram be done?

The test will be done in the Diagnostic Imaging Department at the:

☐ Halifax Infirmary

- › Go to the 3rd floor and register at the Diagnostic Imaging registration desk.

☐ Victoria General

- › Go to the 3rd floor of the Dickson Building and register at the Diagnostic Imaging registration desk.

How long will I be at the hospital?

You should plan to be at the hospital for 6 to 7 hours. The angiogram will take place in the morning. It will take 1 to 2 hours. You will then rest for at least 4 hours before going home.

After the angiogram, you must have someone drive you home and stay with you overnight. You must not drive a car or take a bus or taxi.

If you live more than 50 km from a hospital, you must stay in Halifax overnight after the angiogram. This is for your safety.

How do I get ready for the angiogram?

- **Tell your referring doctor if you are pregnant or have any allergies.**
- **You may continue taking smoking cessation products.**
- **If you are taking a blood thinner medication, you may need to stop taking it. Please talk about this with your referring doctor. Tell your doctor if you are taking a blood-thinner, including:**
 - › Aspirin®
 - › dabigatran
 - › clopidogrel
 - › rivaroxaban
 - › warfarin
 - › apixaban
 - › heparin

If you have a stent or flow-diverter in place, DO NOT stop taking your blood thinner. The angiogram will still be done.

- You will need to have blood tests in the 4 weeks just before your angiogram. Your referring doctor will book these tests for you.
- If you are taking a blood thinner and it is stopped, you may need a blood test a few days before your angiogram. This is to make sure your INR/PTT levels are OK to have the test. If you did not have the blood test ahead of time, there may be a delay on the day of your angiogram.
- On the evening before your angiogram, you must drink at least 4 eight-ounce glasses (4 cups total) of fluid (like milk, juice, tea, coffee and/or water). You may drink fluids until the time of the angiogram.
- **Do not** have any solid food after midnight on the night before the test.
- **Do not** eat breakfast on the day of the test.
- **Do not** take insulin or any other diabetes medication(s) on the morning of the test.
- On the morning of the test, take your other regular medication(s) with small sips of water.
- Bring all of your medications (including your insulin and diabetes pills) to the hospital in their original containers.

How is the angiogram done?

- You will be asked to review and sign a consent form.

- An intravenous (IV) will be inserted (put in) in your arm or the back of your hand using a needle. This is so that the care team can give you fluids or sedation in some cases, or in case you have an allergic reaction.
- Depending on the type of angiogram you are having, it may be done through the femoral artery in your groin (where your leg meets the body), or the radial artery in your wrist.
- If you are having the procedure done through the femoral artery, the nurse will shave an area in both groins.
- Your groin or wrist will be washed with disinfectant and covered with sterile (clean) towels.
- The doctor will inject freezing medication into your groin or wrist area so you do not feel any pain.
- The doctor will make a small incision (cut) and insert a catheter (long plastic tube) into your artery. They will move the catheter up the artery until it reaches the area they want to see.
- They will then inject a dye through the catheter into your blood vessels. You may have a warm feeling when the dye is injected. This will only last for a few seconds.
- A series of X-rays will be taken.

- After the X-rays are taken, the doctor will take out the catheter. Pressure will be put on the insertion site for 10 minutes to help stop any bleeding. If the incision was made at the wrist, an inflatable arm band may be used to hold pressure.
- You will then be taken to the Recovery Room.

What will happen after the test?

- A nurse will watch you closely. They will check your blood pressure, pulse, and the insertion site several times.
- If the incision was in your groin, you will be on bed rest for at least 4 hours. **Do not** lift your head or bend your affected leg. Your insertion site may start to bleed. Your nurse will tell you when you can have the head of your bed raised and when you can get up.
- If the incision was in your arm, you will rest and your nurse will monitor you closely for at least 2 hours.
- **Call your nurse right away if you have any pain, swelling, or bleeding.**
- You will get lunch or a snack, and a drink.
- You will be able to leave the hospital after your bed rest. **Someone must take you home and stay with you overnight.**

- The Recovery Room nurse will give you a list of things to expect and things to do when you get home.
- For 3 days after your procedure
 - › **Do not** lift anything heavy
 - › **Do not** bend over, if you have an incision in your groin
 - › **Do not** do any strenuous (hard) activities. If you are not sure about an activity, please ask a member of your health care team before going home.

At home, if you have any new pain or bleeding, call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.

Do not drive yourself.

When will I get the test results?

Your referring doctor will get the results the day after your angiogram. They will be sent a written report within 5 days.

They will share the results of the test with you.

If you have questions about your care after your angiogram:

Talk to a nurse in the Angiogram Day unit:

- › Phone: 902-473-5347

If you have questions about your appointment:

Call the Diagnostic Imaging Department:

☐ Halifax Infirmary

- › Phone: 902-473-5327

☐ Victoria General

- › Phone: 902-473-5477

or

- › Phone: 902-473-7785

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Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.