

Peripheral Angiogram

General Information

You may have circulation problems that have to do with your blood vessels. You may feel aches, pains, cramps, numbness or muscle fatigue when you exercise. These feelings may be caused by cholesterol buildup in your arteries (called atherosclerosis), which interferes with blood flow to or from your blood vessels. This is also known as peripheral arterial disease (PAD).

In PAD, cholesterol and plaque (a fatty deposit) collect on the inside of the walls of your blood vessels. This most often occurs in your legs. If the fatty build-up keeps collecting, your blood flow will be reduced. When you exercise, your blood flow may not meet your body's need for extra oxygen. Without a constant supply of oxygen, tissue below the blockage can be permanently damaged. You will need treatment to prevent loss of your foot or part of your leg.

Peripheral Angiogram

A peripheral angiogram is a test done with a catheter (a small, thin tube) which your doctor inserts through an artery in your arm or leg. A special x-ray monitor allows the doctor to watch the dye flowing through the arteries to tell if there are areas of narrowing.

Before the Procedure

- Do not eat or drink 6 hours before the procedure.
- Take your medicines as usual the day of your procedure with small sips of water. If you have diabetes or take warfarin (Coumadin), ask your cardiologist for instructions.
- If you have an allergy to the x-ray dye or shellfish, tell the nurse.
- At the hospital you will sign a consent form and wear a hospital gown.
- Your arm and/or groin area will be cleaned and shaved if needed.
- You may receive medicine to relax.

During the Procedure

- Your arm and/or groin will be cleaned again and your blood pressure will be taken. You will be placed on a heart monitor. This monitor lets the technician watch your heart rate and blood pressure during the test.
- Your doctor will inject a local anesthesia (to numb the area) where the catheter will be placed. This may sting.
- You may feel slight pressure as the catheter goes in.

- Once the catheter is in place, an x-ray dye (contrast) will be injected and x-ray pictures will be taken. You may feel a warm flush and/or a metallic taste in your mouth during the exam.

After the Procedure

- After the test, the catheter will be taken out and pressure held directly on the site until bleeding stops.
- The procedure may take one hour or more.
- Nurses will check your pulse, blood pressure and insertion site.
- You will stay flat in bed for as long as ordered by your doctor.
- You will be able to eat and drink as soon as you like. You may want to drink extra fluids to get the dye out of your body. You will not see any change in the color of your urine.
- The results will be discussed with your doctor.

Home Care

- Activity – On the day of the procedure:
 - Maintain a low level of activity such as moving from the couch to the bedroom. Avoid stairs as much as possible
- On the days after your procedure:
 - Gradually increase your activity such as walking short distances.
 - You may shower and drive.
 - Avoid lifting anything that weighs more than 5 to 10 pounds for one week after the procedure.
- **Incision**
 - Remove the bandage after one day.
 - Avoid putting ointments or creams on the incision.
 - Some bruising may occur around the incision and down your leg.
- **Medicines**
 - You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) for discomfort.
 - Take other medicines as directed by your doctor.
- **Diet**
 - Drink plenty of water on the day of the procedure to flush out the dye.
 - Return to your normal diet.

When to Call your Nurse

Call your nurse if you:

- See bleeding at the catheter-insertion site
- Feel tingling or notice numbness below the catheter incision site
- Have pain at the catheter insertion site.