

## Cerebral Angiogram

### What is it?

A cerebral angiogram is a test to look at the blood vessels in your brain. It is a test in which we take a series of x-ray pictures (fluoroscopy) with the use of (x-ray dye) contrast. The contrast allows the doctor to see the blood vessels (arteries) in your neck and head on TV screens in real time. The test often lasts 1-2 hours.

### Why do you need an angiogram?

This test is used to check the blood flow through an artery. Your doctor may want you to have this test to check blood flow before surgery or to look for a blockage.

Let us know if you have sleep apnea or use a machine at night when you sleep. This is important to know so we can safely use medicines that make you sleepy during the procedure.

### Day of the Test

The morning of the test do not eat solid foods or milk for 6 hours before the exam. Do not drink clear liquids (anything you can see through) less than 2 hours before the exam. On the morning of the test, you may take your oral medicines with small sips of water unless your doctor or nurse has told you not to.

If you have diabetes and take insulin, we ask you to take one half (1/2) of your normal morning dose on the day of the test. If you take a medicine called Glucophage (metformin) you should **NOT** take it the morning of the angiogram. You will not take this medicine for 48 hours after the angiogram. Please tell your doctor if you are taking any oral diabetes medicines.

A nurse will take you to a special room (the angio suite). We may place a small tube into your bladder to drain urine since you will not be able to get up to go to the bathroom during or after the test. We may need extra blood or urine tests before your angiogram and will get them at that time.

A doctor will go over details of the angiogram with you and answer any questions you might have.

When it is time for your test, we will take you to a special room (the angio suite). You will lie flat on a table that moves. The nurse will connect monitors to watch your heart rate, breathing, and blood pressure. We will give you medicine to make you sleepy. Once you are ready, the groin area just above your leg (near the hip bone and inner thigh) will be shaved and then cleansed with a liquid that may feel very cold. We will cover you with sterile sheets and we will use an anesthetic to numb that site before the small tube (catheter) is placed into the artery.

### During the Test

During the test, you will need to lie very still to get the best results. As the catheter is guided through your blood vessels, the path will be checked by x-rays. Once the catheter is in place, you will have several injections of x-ray dye. You may have a warm feeling on the side of your neck and face, lasting 30-60 seconds. This is normal. The clicking noise you hear from the x-ray machines is normal. You may also notice the lights in the room turning on and off. The doctors and staff step out of the room for a short time while the x-rays are being taken. At any time during the test, if you feel uncomfortable or short of breath, tell your doctor.

### **After the Test**

Once the angiogram is done, we will remove the catheter and apply firm pressure on the area for about 15-30 minutes to prevent bleeding. For some time, you will need to keep your leg straight. You may roll side to side with help from your nurse. A nurse will check your blood pressure, pulse, and the catheter site often in the first hours after the test. We will also ask you to drink plenty of fluids to help flush the dye from your system. You should drink 10-20 glasses of fluid for the first 24 hours. You may remove the bandage over the groin the next day and gently wash the area with a mild soap and water. Do not rub this area to dry the skin. You should only 'blot' the area with a towel.

### **Activities**

For the next week:

- Do **not** soak in a bath tub or hot tub.
- You should not do any heavy lifting (over 10 pounds).
- No vigorous activity.
- No swimming.
- You may remove the bandage over the groin the next day and gently wash the area with a mild soap and water. Do not rub this area to dry the skin. You should only 'blot' the area with a towel.

### **What to Expect**

- The puncture site might be tender or sore. This often goes away after a few days, but it can last up to one week.
- You may notice some bruising in your groin. This goes away after 2-3 weeks.
- Some patients feel a small hard bump about the size of a peanut at the groin site. This is normal and often goes away after several months.

### **When to Call the Doctor**

- If puncture site becomes red or hot.
- If any yellow or green drainage comes from site.
- If swelling occurs at the site.
- If your temperature goes above 100°F.
- If you have severe pain or spasm in the leg.
- If you have numbness or tingling in the foot or leg.
- If you have itching, hives, or rash.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 7/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#7417.