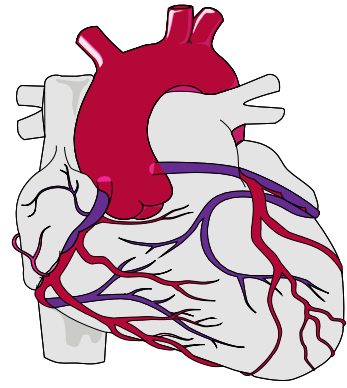
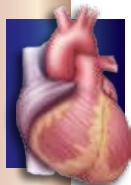


CARDIAC IMAGING



Questions to ask your cardiologist:

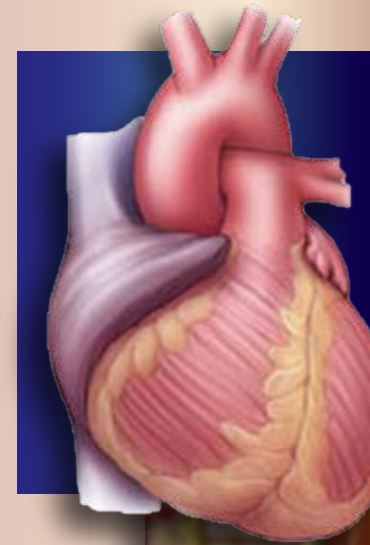


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CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION

A Patient-and Family-Centered Approach to Cardiology Services



CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION

What is Cardiac Catheterization?

Cardiac catheterization is a diagnostic test that checks the blood flow in the coronary arteries and blood pressure in the chambers of the heart. Sometimes a test called a ventriculogram looks at the movements of the wall of the left ventricle and the heart valves. Cardiac catheterization is performed to evaluate heart valves, heart function, and blood supply to the heart. It may also be used to determine the need for further treatment.

Preparation

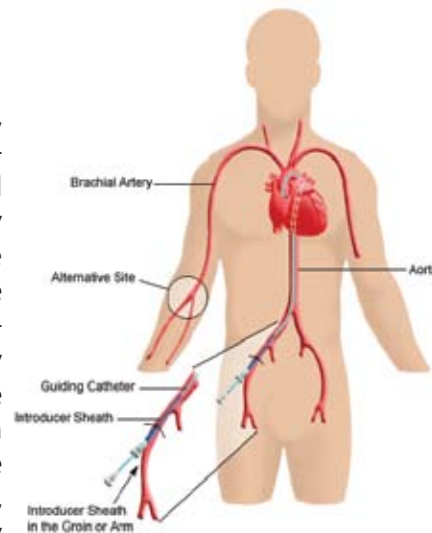
Food	Do not eat or drink after midnight the day of the procedure.
Morning medications	Can be taken with a sip of water, unless otherwise directed by your cardiologist.
Coumadin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not take any coumadin for 3 days prior to the procedure. If you have mitral or aortic valve replacement, please check with your cardiologist.
Insulin	If you take insulin for your diabetes, please take half your normal dose of insulin the day of the procedure.
Glucophage	Do not use Glucophage the day of the procedure and for 2 days following the procedure.
Lab Work	Lab work will be taken in the office a few days before the procedure or in the St. Mary's Outpatient Department when you arrive for the procedure.
Allergies	Tell your doctor if you are allergic to seafood, if you have had a reaction to contrast material in the past, if you are taking Viagra, or if you might be pregnant.
Consent Form	Your cardiologist will explain the procedure and its risks. A signed consent for the procedure will be filled out with your cardiologist.
Driving	Please make arrangements to have someone drive you home after the procedure.

Where do I go the day of the procedure?

On the day of your cardiac catheterization, go to St. Mary's Outpatient Department on the second floor of the hospital. The Outpatient Department staff will register you and escort you to the changing room to change into a hospital gown. You will need to remove all clothing, including underwear and bra and any necklaces. The hospital gown ties in the back. After changing, you will be escorted to a bed where an IV will be started and lab work may be done. The nurse will do a preliminary prep and shave your groin area in preparation for the exam. If your doctor has ordered oral medication to help you relax, the Outpatient Department staff will give these to you prior to the procedure.

How is a cardiac catheterization performed?

When the physician is ready to perform the cardiac catheterization, you will be placed on a stretcher and taken to the Cardiac Catheterization Lab. The Staff will ask a few medical questions and then you will be moved over to the x-ray table. Once the physician arrives, you may be given a mild sedative through your IV to help you relax. The nurse will place EKG leads to monitor your heart rhythm throughout the procedure. Your blood pressure and oxygen levels will also be monitored. An x-ray technologist will prepare you for the procedure by cleaning your groin with a sterile solution and covering you from the neck down with a surgical drape. The cardiologist will numb the area with lidocaine and will carefully thread a catheter from the leg all the way to the heart, using x-ray for guidance. Once the catheter is in place, contrast material is injected and pictures are taken. The procedure may last about an hour.



Courtesy of Boston Scientific

How will the procedure feel?

A cardiac catheterization is performed by a highly trained cardiologist, radiologic technologist(s), and nurse(s). You will be awake and able to follow instructions during the catheterization. You may feel groggy from the mild sedative given to help you relax. Because a local anesthesia is used to numb your groin near the site where the catheter is inserted, the only sensation should be one of pressure at the site. You may experience some discomfort from remaining still for the procedure. The catheter will be removed after the procedure. To prevent bleeding, a firm pressure may be applied at the insertion site. You will be asked to lie flat on your back for a few hours after the procedure to avoid bleeding. This may cause some mild back discomfort.

What can loved ones expect?

A family member or friend may come with you for your cardiac catheterization. They will be able to sit with you in the Outpatient Department before and after the procedure. Because you may have taken medication to help you relax, they may find you to be a little groggy, but able to talk and carry on a conversation. During the procedure family members may wait in the waiting room. Our staff will be happy to give them directions to a site where you may obtain coffee or food if they wish. Their wait will be around one hour. With your permission, your cardiologist will let your loved ones know how you are doing and how the procedure went.

What to expect after the procedure:

When the procedure is finished, you will return to the Outpatient Department where your blood pressure, heart rhythm, and oxygen levels will continue to be monitored. This open-concept room will provide direct nursing supervision for you after the procedure. You may be given a light lunch and something to drink. You will be lying flat with your head only slightly elevated for the next few hours. After the cardiac catheterization you may sense a fullness in the groin. There can also be some mild bruising. Depending on whether or not your cardiologist is able to use a closure device that quickly seals the incision site, you may be in the Outpatient Department for two to six hours. When you are ready to go home, you will be given a list of instructions to help you understand your limitations for the next few days.

When will I get the results?

Your cardiologist should give preliminary results of the test to you and your loved ones at the time of the test. The results of your cardiac catheterization may be used by your cardiologist to refine your treatment plan. This may include changing your medication or recommending additional procedures, if a problem should be discovered.

What are my restrictions after the procedure?

Someone will have to drive you home. If you should have any discomfort, you may take Tylenol, but we do not recommend aspirin or large doses of Motrin. When you get home, do not participate in strenuous activity for two days. We do not recommend showering for at least 24 hours. Try to limit yourself to one flight of stairs. If you feel swelling, or a lump formation, or if you are bleeding, press on the area with your fingers and notify your physician or go to the St. Mary's Emergency Room (777-8120).

The next day you may be up and around but refrain strenuous activity. You may ride in a car, but do not drive. It is best to take it easy for the next few days. If you should have a fever, increasing pain, tenderness, redness, or swelling at the procedure site, please notify your cardiologist.



Our tests are performed by highly trained cardiologists and staff.

