

## Patient information

### Cardiac angiogram

Cardiac team

#### Introduction

We hope this guide will answer your questions about your cardiac angiogram. Please contact the team if you require further information via the contact details at the end of this leaflet.

#### What is a cardiac angiogram?

A cardiac angiogram is a special test used to assess the blood supply to your heart. It is also called 'cardiac catheterisation' or a 'dye test of the heart'.

A specially trained doctor called a cardiologist, nurses and technicians perform the test. A long, thin flexible tube (catheter) is inserted into an artery, either in your groin or your wrist, under local anaesthetic, in order to reach your heart. A dye is then injected, which can be seen on a TV screen using special X-ray equipment.

#### Why do I need a cardiac angiogram?

This test is carried out to take a closer look at the arteries that supply blood to your heart. It is performed when doctors suspect that your arteries may have narrowed or be blocked as you have experienced pain in your heart, or a heart attack. It is the next step after initial tests such as an electrocardiogram (ECG), exercise test or scan in order to further investigate.

#### How safe is an angiogram?

As with any medical procedure, some risks are associated. The decision to perform the angiogram will only have been made when it is felt that the benefits of knowing what the arteries look like outweigh the risks involved.

You will be invited for pre-assessment prior to your procedure and be given a leaflet explaining the risks.

Your doctor will answer any questions you or your family may have on the day of procedure.

#### Preparing for your procedure

This procedure is usually carried out as a day case, although, occasionally, it may be necessary to admit you to hospital on the day before or afterwards, depending on your circumstances.

#### Women between the ages of 12 and 55 years

The procedure needs to be performed during the first 10 days of your menstrual cycle. If you think you may be pregnant, please tell your doctor. Please contact the team for advice.

## Eating and drinking

### If you have a morning appointment:

- You may have a light breakfast e.g. tea and toast or cereal by 6am. You may then only drink water until your appointment time.

### If you have an afternoon appointment:

- You may have breakfast as usual and then a snack e.g. tea and a biscuit or sandwich before 11am. You may then only drink water until your appointment time.

## Medication

If you have diabetes and are on Insulin and/or Metformin, or you take any blood thinning medication, please discuss this with the team at pre-assessment.

## Getting to us

The Cath Lab is on the lower ground floor, next to the Alexandra Day Surgery Unit (ADSU). We are in the Blue Zone.

Please arrange to be dropped off and collected from the maternity drop off. You can access this from entrance B, from Hayden's Roundabout.

## When should I arrive?

Please arrive at your appointment time and not before.

If you have a morning appointment, please expect to be in the department for most of the morning.

If you have an afternoon appointment, please expect to be in the department for most of the afternoon.

There is preparation time before the procedure and recovery time afterwards.

## The day of the procedure

The procedure is usually carried out as a day case. Whilst you may make your own way to the hospital, you need to arrange for somebody to accompany you home and stay with you overnight.

You will be greeted by the team and taken to your bed on the day ward. There will be a short checklist to go through. You will be seen by the doctor who will examine you, check that you are happy to go ahead and ask you to sign a consent form for the procedure.

The area where the catheter is to be inserted will be shaved, if required. Just before you have the procedure, it is a good idea to empty your bladder so you will be comfortable during the procedure.

There may be some waiting before your procedure and the theatre environment can seem cold to some. It is suggested you bring something to read and a warm dressing gown or top to wear over your hospital gown.

## The procedure

A member of staff will accompany you when it is time for the procedure. The room will have a lot of specialist equipment and the staff will be wearing theatre clothing. The room will be air conditioned, which will make it feel cooler.

A member of the team will use an electrocardiogram (ECG) monitor to check your heart

rate and rhythm. A nurse will clean the area where a long, flexible tube (catheter) is to be inserted. You will be awake for the procedure, as it is carried out using local anaesthetic (numbing medicine). Please let the nurses know if you would like sedation.

The local anaesthetic will be injected into the area, which will sting initially and then become numb. If you feel pain, please tell the team. As the catheter is inserted, you may feel slight pressure.

You may be asked to turn your head to one side or hold your breath at times. You will not normally feel the dye as it is injected.

Usually the procedure takes between 15 and 20 minutes to complete. It may take longer if more images are required.

If the angiogram is performed via your femoral artery (in your groin) you may have a small bung implanted to close the hole that was made to pass the catheter. This is called an angioseal and contains a small amount of collagen from a bovine (beef) source. If you require more information about this please ring to speak to the team at pre-assessment.

### After the procedure

You will return back to your bed where you will be monitored closely by the nursing team.

You will be able to eat and drink as normal. You will be encouraged to drink plenty of water to flush the dye out of your system.

Your doctor will discuss the results with you and you are encouraged to ask any questions.

### Can I drive after my procedure?

You are advised not to drive for 48 hours after your procedure. Please ensure you have someone to collect you and stay with you overnight.

### Can someone stay with me in hospital?

You may be accompanied by one responsible adult.

### How soon can I return to work?

You should rest for 48 hours after your procedure. You can return to work after this time unless advised otherwise by your doctor.

### Contacting the team

If you have any further questions, please contact the Cardiac Angiography Suite on:

**Telephone:** 01279 827814 or 01279 827913

**Office hours:** Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm

There is an answerphone available outside of these hours. Please leave a message and a member of the team will contact you.

If you would like to give feedback on your care, please contact our patient experience team on [paht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:paht.pals@nhs.net) or 01279 827211.

Please contact the communications team on [paht.communications@nhs.net](mailto:paht.communications@nhs.net) or 01279 827926 if you would like this leaflet in another language or format.