



## CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION

### What it is

Cardiac catheterization/coronary angiography is a dye test used to detect heart problems. A long, thin flexible tube called a catheter is inserted into your wrist or your groin and guided up to your heart. Once in position, a dye is injected and X-ray pictures are taken. The special dye allows the X-rays to capture pictures of your coronary arteries and highlights where any blockages or narrowed spots may be. This test can also look at the condition of your heart valves and your heart muscle as well as measuring pressures in the heart chambers.

Although tests such as stress tests, echocardiograms, electrocardiograms, and physical examination provide important information about your heart's blood flow, coronary angiography is a more definitive test for the presence and severity of coronary artery disease (CAD).

### Performance/Preparation

Do not eat or drink for 6-8 hours prior to the procedure. The groin area will be shaved and prepped and the wrist may be prepared as well. An intravenous will be inserted. You will be given medication to help you relax, but you will be awake during the procedure so that you can follow instructions from the doctor and nurses. The doctor will administer freezing to your groin or your wrist. A small catheter will be threaded through an artery in your wrist or groin and guided up to the heart. X-ray pictures will be taken and a special dye will be injected through the catheter to highlight your coronary arteries and identify if there are any narrowed sections or blockages. Most patients experience a sensation of body warmth as the dye is injected or the urge to empty their bladder.

### Duration

The procedure usually lasts between 30-90 minutes depending on whether a stent is deployed at the time of the procedure.

### Medications

Please take your medications as prescribed. Most patients are usually on aspirin but your doctor may prescribe additional blood thinners if you are going to get a stent.

### Driving

You are instructed not to drive following the procedure. Please arrange to have someone bring you home.