

# Heart Catheterization

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A heart catheterization (or angiogram) lets your doctor see how well your heart pumps blood. Your doctor will be able to look at your heart muscle, valves and coronary arteries.

This test is done with a catheter (a small, thin tube) which your doctor inserts through an artery or vein in your arm or leg. A special X-ray monitor allows the cardiologist (heart doctor) to watch the contrast flowing through the heart vessels to see if there are areas of narrowing.

## Food and Liquid Directions Before Surgery

These directions are based on your scheduled arrival time. Not following these directions could mean your procedure will be delayed or canceled.

### Alcohol and tobacco: 24 hours

- Do not drink any alcohol 24 hours before your scheduled arrival time.
- Do not smoke, vape, use chewing tobacco or use any other tobacco products up to 24 hours before your scheduled arrival time.

### Solid foods: 8 hours

- Eat up to 8 hours before your scheduled arrival time.
  - Eat light meals such as oatmeal or toast.
  - Do not eat foods that are heavy or high in fat such as meat or fried foods.

### Clear liquids: 2 hours

- Drink only clear liquids up to 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time.
  - Drink water, fruit juice without pulp, black coffee, clear pop or tea.
  - Do not have milk, yogurt, energy drinks or alcohol.

### Medicines

- Take your medicines as directed with a small sip of water.
  - Talk with your cardiologist if you have diabetes or if you take warfarin (Jantoven®).

### Before the Procedure

- Follow your cardiologist's directions for taking your regular medicine.
- If you have diabetes, remind your cardiologist of your diet, medicine or insulin needs.
- **Tell your cardiologist or nurse if you have an allergy to the X-ray contrast.**
- At the hospital, you will sign a consent form and wear a hospital gown.
- Your arm, groin area or both will be cleaned and shaved.
- A nurse will start an intravenous (IV) line for medicine during the test.
- You may receive medicine to relax you.

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## During the Procedure

- Your arm, groin area or both will be cleaned again. Your blood pressure will be taken. You will be hooked up to a heart monitor. This monitor lets the cardiac technician watch your heart rate and blood pressure during the procedure.
- Your cardiologist will inject a local anesthetic (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, your cardiologist will take pictures of your heart. You may be asked to hold your breath or to cough. You may feel a brief hot flash (up to 30 seconds) when contrast is injected into your left ventricle.

If the cardiologist suspects a heart valve problem, he or she will examine the right side of your heart.

- The cardiologist will take out the catheter. He or she will apply pressure on the site until bleeding stops.
- The procedure may take 1 hour or longer.

## After the Procedure

- Nurses will check your pulse, blood pressure and insertion site.
- You will stay flat in bed for as long as ordered by your cardiologist.
- You will be able to eat and drink as soon as you like. You may want to drink extra fluids to get the contrast out of your body. You will not see any change in the color of your urine.
- The results will be discussed with your regular doctor.

## When To Call Your Nurse

Before you leave the hospital, call your nurse if you:

- see bleeding at the catheter insertion site
- feel tingling or notice numbness below the catheter insertion site
- have pain at the catheter insertion site.