

# Myelogram

## Myelogram

Your health care provider wants you to have a myelogram. This is a detailed X-ray of your spinal cord, nerves and discs.

The exam takes about 45 minutes.

## What To Tell Your Health Care Provider

Tell your health care provider if you:

- have any allergies to latex or medicine
- have had a contrast reaction
- are breastfeeding, pregnant or think you may be pregnant
- **have diabetes** (Ask for an early morning appointment and talk with your health care provider about your medicine needs.)
- take blood thinners (like warfarin)
- take any other medicines. (Check with your health care provider see if you have special medicine instructions.)

## Before the Exam

- Please arrange to have someone drive you home. **You will not be able to drive after the exam.** You should have someone stay with you or be available to help you for 12 hours after the exam.
- Please follow any instructions you received from your health care provider.
- Do not drink beverages that contain alcohol or caffeine for 24 hours before the exam.

## Your Appointment

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. / p.m.

Plan to spend at least \_\_\_\_\_ minutes / hours at the facility.

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

If you need to cancel or reschedule, please call at least 24 hours before your scheduled appointment.

- You may eat a light breakfast the day of the exam.
- Drink clear liquids that do not have caffeine (water, apple juice, Jell-O<sup>®</sup>, decaffeinated soda) until the time of the exam.
- Take any medicines you need with a small sip of water, or as directed by your health care provider.
- Bring a list of your medicines and doses with you to the hospital. Include all prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, herbal or natural products.

**(over)**

## During the Exam

- You will wear a hospital gown.
- You will lie on your stomach on an X-ray table.
- Your back will be washed with a solution that helps prevent infection.
- A numbing medicine will be injected into your spinal sac, away from your spinal cord.
- A contrast will be injected into the spinal sac, away from your spinal cord.
- X-ray images of your spine will be taken. You may be asked to change positions and the table will be tilted.
- You may feel muscle spasms or discomfort.
- You will have a CT (computed tomography) scan of your spine. It will be done right after the myelogram. (CT is a type of X-ray.)

## After the Exam

- You will be in recovery for about 2 hours after the exam.
- To help prevent headaches, the head of your bed will be raised slightly (with two pillows).
- You may walk to the bathroom.
- You may sit up to eat.
- Your health care team will check your blood pressure and pulse, and give you home care instructions.
- Have someone drive you home. Do not drive until tomorrow morning.
- Have someone stay with you or be available to you for 12 hours after the exam.
- Do not lie flat. Raise your head with two pillows for 24 hours. This will reduce your chance of getting a headache. You may get up to use the bathroom and sit up to eat.
- Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours.

- Return to your normal diet and medicines. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.

## Follow-up Results

- A radiologist will look at and interpret the X-rays.
- Your health care provider will receive the results of your exam. He or she will either talk with you about the results or mail you the results.

## Contrast

- Your bloodstream carries the contrast from your spinal fluid to your kidneys. Your kidneys dilute the contrast and send it to your urine.
- The contrast is clear and will not cause your urine to change color.
- Drink up to four 8-ounce glasses of liquid so your kidneys can easily get rid of the contrast.

## When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have any of the following:

- nausea with vomiting
- severe headache
- lethargy (sleepiness) or confusion
- redness or drainage at the puncture site
- chills or a temperature of 101 F or higher
- other concerns.