

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

The following are based on your arrival time to the hospital, not your scheduled surgery time.

Smoking, vaping or chewing tobacco: 24 hours

- Do not smoke, vape, use chewing tobacco or use any other tobacco products up to 24 hours before your scheduled arrival time. This will reduce the risk of complications (problems).
- If you do use tobacco products within 8 hours of your scheduled arrival time, your surgery may be delayed or canceled.

Alcohol: 24 hours

- Do not drink alcohol up to 24 hours before your scheduled arrival time.

Solid food: 8 hours

- You may eat your regular foods up to 8 hours before your scheduled arrival time.

Solid food: 6 hours

- You may eat a light meal up to 6 hours before your scheduled arrival time. A light meal is:
 - **one** of these:
 - ☐ 2 pieces of toast with a light topping
 - ☐ 1 granola or protein bar
 - ☐ 1 cup (8 oz.) oatmeal or other hot cereal
 - **and one** of these:
 - ☐ 16 ounces of milk, coffee (with or without cream), juice (with or without pulp) or a sports drink.

Clear liquids: 2 hours

- Drink clear liquids up to 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time. Clear liquids are **only** these:
 - ☐ water
 - ☐ fruit juice **without** pulp
 - ☐ sports drinks
 - ☐ soda
 - ☐ black coffee **without** cream or creamer
 - ☐ tea **without** cream or creamer.
- Drink 12 to 20 ounces of electrolyte sports drink (Gatorade® or Powerade®) 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time.

(over)

Hard candy and gum: 2 hours

- You may have hard candy (such as a lemon drop or throat lozenge) or chew gum up to 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time.
- You may use gums and lozenges for tobacco cravings up to 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time.

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.
- **If you have an allergy to the X-ray contrast, tell your cardiologist or nurse.**
- 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.

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.