

Coronary Angiogram



What is a Coronary Angiogram?

A coronary angiogram is a test to check your heart arteries. A heart doctor (cardiologist) puts a thin tube (catheter) into an artery in your wrist or groin. The tube is gently moved to your heart. A special dye is then injected into your arteries. This dye shows up on an X-ray, helping the doctor see if any arteries are narrow or blocked.

Your doctor will use this information to decide the best treatment. Sometimes, treatment can happen during the angiogram. Other times, it may be planned for later.

Why do I need a Coronary Angiogram?

Your doctor may order this test if you have signs of heart disease, such as:

- Chest pain
- Feeling tired
- Shortness of breath

These symptoms may mean your heart arteries are becoming narrow.

How do I prepare for a Coronary Angiogram?

- A nurse will call you a few weeks before to book your procedure.
- You will need a blood test taken prior to the procedure. If needed, a request form will be given to you.
- Provide a full list of your medications. Some may need to be stopped before the procedure.
- Medications:** Follow the instructions on your booking letter.
- If you have diabetes, **do not** take your morning insulin or diabetes tablets while fasting. Your blood sugar will be checked at the hospital.
- A nurse will call you the day before your procedure to confirm instructions.
- Fasting:** Do not eat after midnight before your procedure. You can drink small sips of water until you arrive.
- Bring with you:** Your medications, Medicare Card, a small overnight bag, your phone and charger. Do not bring any other valuables.
- Arrange for an adult to drive you home and stay with you overnight.

What will happen during the Coronary Angiogram?

1. You will check in at the hospital and change into a gown.
2. A nurse will take your vital signs, insert an IV and shave your wrist and/or groin where the tube will go.
3. A doctor will explain the procedure and you will sign a consent form.
4. In the procedure room, you will get a mild sedative through your IV to help you relax. You will stay awake.
5. The Cardiologist will insert a small tube into an artery, and move it toward your heart.
6. Dye will be injected, and X-rays will check for narrow or blocked arteries.
7. After the test, the doctor or nurse will remove the tube and press on the area to stop any bleeding.

What to Expect After the Procedure

- You will be moved to the recovery area.
- If the wrist was used you will eat and drink straight away.
- If the groin was used you will need to lie flat for at least 2 hours before sitting up to eat and drink.
- A nurse will check your puncture site and tell you how to care for it.
- If you only had an angiogram, you can usually go home on the same day after a few hours.
- If you need a heart stent, a doctor will decide if you can go home the same day or stay overnight.
- If you do go home the same day, someone **must** stay with you overnight.
- You **cannot** drive for 48 hours, so arrange for someone to drive you home.

What should I do after the Procedure?

- Check your puncture site for bleeding or infection.
- Rest for the day, no heavy lifting or hard exercise.
- No driving or using heavy machinery for 48 hours due to the medication used.

Contact Information

If you have a question about your appointment, please call:

- Cardiac Catheter Lab: 5454 7010
- Cardiology Clinic: 5454 8017

For more information, visit the Heart Foundation website at www.heartfoundation.org.au and search for 'Coronary Angiogram'

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