



## HEART SCIENCES CENTER

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### HEART CATHETERIZATION

#### **What is a Heart Catheterization?**

A Heart Catheterization is a procedure that will check the flow of blood through the 3 main arteries that supply your heart with blood. An IV will be started in your arm. You will be taken to the cardiac catheterization lab at the hospital and will lie flat on the exam table. You will be given some medication through the IV that will make you mildly sleepy but you will be able to talk to the staff and doctor and will be able to ask and answer questions. Because of the medication you will be given, you may not remember much about the procedure. Next, the right and left groin will be cleaned and shaved. A “numbing” medication will be injected at your groin site to help you be more comfortable. A catheter (a long, thin plastic tube) is then inserted through the groin into the femoral artery and advanced up through the aorta (a major blood vessel in your abdomen and chest). The catheter then reaches your heart. Dye will be injected through the catheter and will illuminate your heart vessels and the images will be recorded so your doctor can fully evaluate the circulation of blood through these heart vessels.

#### **Why do I need to have this procedure done?**

Your doctor has recommended heart catheterization to evaluate the blood flow through your heart arteries. It is done to identify any significant blockages in these vessels. These blockages may be contributing to symptoms you may be having and are, in some people, responsible for causing heart attack.

#### **How should I prepare for the procedure?**

- You will not be allowed to eat or drink anything after midnight the night before the procedure.
- Your doctor will advise you regarding the medication you should take the morning of the procedure.
- Please remove all jewelry and piercings.
- You may wear your glasses and dentures (if applicable) to the hospital but may be asked to remove these prior to the procedure.
- Your family may accompany you to the hospital. A small number of family members (1 or 2) may accompany you into the holding area while you wait for the test. During the procedure, your family will be asked to wait in the family waiting area.
- At the hospital, you will change into a hospital gown and robe. All underclothes should be removed. You will sign a consent form for the procedure and an IV will be started in your arm. A heart monitor will be placed, your blood pressure and heart rate will be monitored and the nursing staff will go over any appropriate paperwork prior to the procedure.
- When the time comes for the procedure, you will be taken into the procedure room and your family will be shown to the waiting room.

#### **Is there anything specific to do after the test?**

- Once the test is completed, your doctor will review the films and be able to identify the most appropriate treatment of your condition. This may consist of taking medications, ballooning open

the blockage, placing a stent or possible surgery if blockages were found. No treatment would be recommended if your test is normal.

- After the test, you will gradually become more awake as the sedative medication wears off.
- You will lie flat in the bed for several hours to protect your groin/femoral artery site where the procedure was done – sitting up or getting out of bed before you are advised to do so may lead to bleeding or extensive bruising at the groin.
- A dressing will be applied to your groin but can be removed after you get home. An adhesive bandage can be used to the groin site once you are home if this is more comfortable for you.
- You will be allowed to start eating and drinking once you are more awake.
- You may feel tired or weak for the first day but your energy level should return to your usual level within a few days.
- The dressing at your groin can be removed the day after the procedure.
- You can shower the day after the procedure.
- Do NOT swim or sit in a bath tub or jacuzzi for 10 days after the procedure to avoid possible infection.
- Your groin site may have some bruising and discomfort. The bruising may spread down your leg, thigh, and around your groin. This is NOT uncommon.
- A small lump may be present on your groin site. This is NOT uncommon.
- IF THE LUMP IN YOUR GROIN GETS LARGER OR MORE PAINFUL, PLEASE CALL YOUR DOCTOR.

**You will come back into the office to see your doctor within 1-2 weeks after the procedure, or otherwise if you are told to do so.**

Please don't hesitate to call our office at (480) 612.0400 if you have any questions or concerns.