



## Cardiology

### Cardiac Catheterization

After a sequence of diagnostic testing and complete cardiac history, a cardiac catheterization may be necessary to more precisely evaluate or confirm the presence of coronary disease, evaluate heart function and determine the need for further treatment. One of the most important reasons for cardiac catheterization is the need to see the blood flowing through the heart and coronary arteries.

#### Preparing for the Study

1. You will need to obtain a chest x-ray and routine laboratory tests several days prior to or on the day of your procedure.
2. Do not eat or drink after midnight of the evening prior to the procedure. Take medications with small sips of water. Your nurse or physician will provide specific instructions. Be sure to inform doctor if you are on Coumadin. This will need to be held for two days. If you are taking medication for diabetes, these should be stopped the night before the procedure.
3. If you have dye allergies, alert your doctor. Specific instructions will be provided to you.
4. Prepare for an overnight stay in the hospital.

#### What to Expect

You will be given a hospital gown to wear. A nurse will start an intravenous (IV) line in your arm so that medications and fluids can be administered during the procedure.

The cardiac catheterization room is cool and dimly lit. The air must be kept cool to prevent damage to the x-ray machinery that is used during the procedure. You will be offered warm blankets to make you more comfortable. You will lie on a special table. If you look above, you will see a large camera and several TV monitors. You can watch your cardiac cath on the monitors. The nurse will clean your skin at the site where the catheter will be inserted into your arm or groin. The catheter insertion site may be shaved. Sterile drapes are used to cover the site and help prevent infection. Your heart rate, pulse and blood pressure will be monitored throughout the procedure. You will be given a mild sedative to relax you, but you will be awake and conscious during the entire procedure. In some cases, a urinary catheter may be needed during the procedure.

The doctor will use a local anesthetic to numb the site and a plastic introducer sheath (a short, hollow tube) will be inserted in a blood vessel in your arm or groin. A catheter will be inserted through the sheath and threaded to the arteries of your heart. You may feel pressure as the introducer sheath or catheter is inserted, but you should not feel pain. Tell the nurse or doctor if you feel any pain.

When the catheter is in place, the lights will be dimmed and a small amount of contrast material will be injected through the catheters into your arteries and heart chambers. The contrast material outlines the vessels, valves and chambers.

When the contrast material is injected into your heart, you may feel hot or flushed for several seconds. This is normal and will go away in a few seconds. **Please tell the doctor or nurses if you feel:**

- an allergic reaction (itching, tightness in the throat)
- nausea
- chest discomfort
- any other symptoms

The x-ray camera will be used to take photographs of the arteries and heart chambers. You will be asked to hold your breath while the x-rays are taken. When all the photos have been taken, the catheter will be removed and the lights will be turned on.

You may have an interventional procedure combined with your cardiac catheterization.

**After the procedure:**

- If the catheter was inserted into your arm, the incision will be bandaged. You will need to keep your arm straight for at least an hour. You will be able to walk around. You will be observed for a few hours to monitor any symptoms or side effects of the procedure. You will be given instructions by your doctor or nurse.
- If the catheter was inserted at the groin, the incision will be closed with applied pressure, suture device or a "plug." You will need to lie flat and keep the leg straight for two to six hours to prevent bleeding (less time if a plug was used). Your head cannot be raised more than 30 degrees (2 pillows high). You should not try to sit or stand. A sterile dressing will be placed on the groin area to protect it from infection. The nurse will check your bandage regularly, but call your nurse if you think you are bleeding (have a wet, warm sensation) or if your toes begin to tingle or feel numb.
- You will need to drink plenty of liquids to clear the contrast material from your body. You may feel the need to urinate more frequently. This is normal. If you are on bedrest, you will need to use a bedpan or urinal.
- Treatment, including medications, diet and future procedures, will be discussed with you prior to going home.
- The cardiac cath procedure only takes about 30 minutes, but plan to spend about 5 to 9 hours from the preparation through the recovery time.
- **After the procedure, it is common to develop a nontender bruise (black and blue) and mild numbness around the puncture site. However, hematomas (hard, painful, tender black and blue), drainage or pain should not develop. If it does, notify your doctor.**

**Date of Procedure** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hospital** \_\_\_\_\_

Your follow up appointment is scheduled on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you for allowing the cardiologists of the Florida Medical Clinic to participate in your healthcare needs.