

Arterial contrast angiography

You are coming for an arterial angiogram. The procedure requires both preparation and aftercare and therefore a place is reserved for you in the ward as well.

What is an angiogram and what can be examined by it?

Angiography refers to contrast imaging of the arteries. The test looks for narrowing, blockages, enlargements, or vascular malformations in the arteries. The arteries of the head, body and limbs can be imaged. The examinations are performed using X-Rays.

How to prepare for the procedure?

- You will arrive at the hospital the day before the procedure.
- Blood tests are taken for the procedure.
- Anti-blood clotting medication (**Marevan**) is stopped 3-4 days before the procedure, with the consent of the treating physician, to prevent bleeding during the procedure.
- Metformin medication for diabetes does not need to be stopped before the procedure. However, the medicine may be stopped after the test if kidney function so requires. You may take other medicines as before with a small drop of water.
- The use of tobacco and other nicotine products is prohibited 24 hours before the procedure, because it causes the blood vessels to constrict and may lead to failure of the procedure.
- Jewellery and watches should be removed before coming for this procedure.
- **You must fast from the morning of the day of the procedure.**
- The examination is usually done through the femoral or radial (wrist) arteries, therefore the skin around the groin fold area should not have redness or a rash, due to the risk of inflammation.
- The examination is performed with the help of X-rays, therefore it must be confirmed that you are not pregnant before the examination. Also known contrast allergies and kidney impairment should also be reported in advance.

How is the procedure done?

The procedure is performed by a Radiologist and two Radiographers. During imaging, you are lying still on your back on the x-ray table. The procedure is performed under general anaesthesia. A thin plastic tube, or catheter, is inserted through the femoral or radial (wrist) artery into the vessel to be imaged, through which a contrast agent is injected. X-rays are taken at the same time.

There is no pain sensitivity in the blood vessels, so moving the catheter in the blood vessel does not hurt. Injecting the contrast agent produces a warm sensation.

How long does the procedure take?

The procedure takes about 1 hour altogether. If narrowing (stenoses) are found during the contrast imaging, they may be treated with a balloon (Percutaneous Transluminal Angioplasty or PTA) if it is possible to do so, but then the examination will take longer.

Any other treatment is performed as scheduled at a different time.

What about after the procedure?

- After the examination, the catheter is removed and the injection site is closed.
- Bed rest after the procedure is 2-5 hours. If you are unable to remain lying on your back, the nurses will help you into another position. Raising the head and lifting the legs are prohibited.
- After the examination, you can eat and drink normally, unless there are other restrictions.
- You may go home either on the evening of the study day or on the next day.
- At home, be mindful of the injection site for about 1 week. Physical exertion, saunas and hot baths should be avoided. Instructions for arterial puncture post-treatment can be found <https://hoito-ohjeet.fi/OhjepankkiVSSHPEnglanti/Instructions%20for%20arterial%20puncture%20post-treatment.pdf>
- When you go home, you will receive more detailed aftercare instructions from the ward.

Where do you get the results from the procedure?

The referring outpatient clinic or ward is responsible for communicating the results of the examination to you.