

Coronary Angiogram

A Coronary Angiogram is a unique X-Ray of your heart performed in a Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory (Cath Lab), which is similar to an operating theatre. The main purpose of this test is to look for abnormalities in the coronary arteries. These arteries are on the surface of the heart and supply the heart muscle with oxygen and other essential nutrients.

Preparation

Your Cardiologist may advise you to cease certain medications before the angiogram. If you are unsure about ceasing your medication before the angiogram, please call Hearts 1st on (07) 3847 4422.

Depending on your circumstances you may be admitted to hospital the day before your angiogram, alternatively you will come in on the day of the test. Prior to an angiogram you must fast from food for 6 hours however it is OK to drink plain water prior. Once admitted and settled in your room you will be asked to shower using a special antiseptic soap to reduce the risk of infection and to shave a small area in the groin where a needle will go.

All jewellery will be removed before being admitted to the Cath Lab therefore we suggest you leave valuable items at home. You will be awake during the procedure but your Cardiologist may recommend a sedative medication to make you feel more comfortable during the test.

Test Duration

Day case or overnight stay.

Procedure

Once in the Cath Lab small adhesive dots will be placed on your chest where thin leads will be connected to a monitor. This allows us to monitor your heart rhythm throughout the angiogram. A local anaesthetic will be administered by a needle into the groin. A fine catheter will be carefully passed through the large artery in the groin until it reaches the arteries of the heart. You will not feel the catheter being moved to the heart.

A contrast agent (a dye) will be injected through the catheter and an X-ray "movie" is taken while the dye moves through the blood vessel. You may experience a warm feeling when the dye is injected. During the test your Cardiologist will ask you to hold your breath for a few seconds and to remain as still as you can. This will allow for the most accurate information to be obtained. At Hearts 1st, we are aware that any medical examination creates some level of anxiety. Your Cardiologist will make every effort to ensure you are as comfortable as possible.

After the procedure you will need to lie flat for 4-6 hours and nursing staff will monitor you. It is not possible to receive visitors during this period. You may need to stay overnight in hospital after a coronary angiogram, your Cardiologist will advise if this is necessary. If you do go home on the day of the test, you will require a family member or friend to drive you home.

Results

Your Cardiologist may discuss the results with you after the procedure however a formal post procedure follow-up appointment will be booked where the results will be thoroughly discussed with you.