

The following information will provide you with a better understanding of the coronary angiography that has been recommended to you. We hope this document will answer most of your questions and help you be better prepared for your coronary angiography. Do not hesitate to discuss the procedure and share your concerns with your nurse. The presence of your spouse or someone close to you may be permitted at different times during your hospital stay.

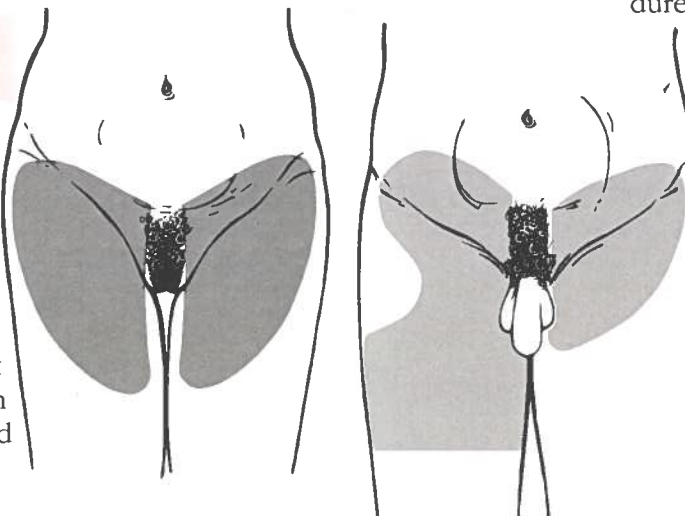
The Nurses

Why you need a coronary angiography

Your physician has recommended that you undergo a coronary angiography because he or she needs more information on the condition of both your heart and coronary arteries (arteries encircling the heart and supplying it with blood) in light of the symptoms you either described or experienced. This test detects any blockages caused by cholesterol (plaque) deposits in your coronary arteries. As well, a coronary angiography shows how well your heart muscle is functioning.

How to prepare for the test

Before your test, blood samples and an electrocardiogram (ECG) will be taken. Women must shave their groin area (bikini line); men must shave their groin area, half-pubis and



right thigh in order to reduce the risk of infection and the inconvenience caused by the dressing.

Depending on the medical instructions given, you will either not be allowed to eat or drink after midnight on the day before the test or allowed only a light breakfast. You will also be asked to sign a consent form for the procedure. **It is important that you inform us of any allergies you have** (e.g. iodine, seafood, etc.).

What happens on the day of the test

A coronary angiography is a test performed in the hemodynamics room. Prior to the procedure, you will be given medication to avoid an allergic reaction. An intravenous catheter will be started in your arm to allow if necessary for the administration of medication during the angiography. However, you will be awake throughout the whole procedure.

When you arrive in the hemodynamics lab, you will see the X-ray equipment, monitors and the staff who will take care of you. You will be laid on an examination table and remain on your back throughout the procedure.

The hard, narrow surface of the table may be somewhat uncomfortable.

Your groin will be disinfected with a solution that may feel cold. Your skin will be temporarily discoloured (pink tinge), but this will go away when you wash. Electrodes

will be placed on your chest to closely monitor your heart rhythm throughout the procedure. You will then be draped with sterile sheets (except for your groin area or your arm), as an additional protection against infection. At no time must you touch the outside of the sterile sheets.

What happens during the test

The physician will numb the site with a local anesthetic. You might feel a slight but momentary burning sensation. Afterwards, you will only feel slight pressure. The physician will insert the catheter and guide it to your heart. The passing of the catheter through the femoral artery is totally painless. During the procedure, you will hear different noises caused mainly by an X-ray machine that will pivot around your chest area. The physician uses this equipment to watch the pathway taken by the catheter on a television screen. Once the catheter reaches the heart, the physician injects a radiopaque dye (visible on X-ray) into the catheter.

At the time of the injection, you will be told to expect a major hot flash throughout your whole body that will last about 15 seconds. Some people say they feel the heat mainly in their face, shoulders, chest, and rectum.

The physician will tell you when to take deep breaths and when to hold them. If you experience any pain, you must inform the physician immediately.

At the end of the test, you will be taken to an observation room where the nurse will remove the catheter. Pressure, uncomfortable but necessary, will be applied on the groin area or wrist with an instrument to prevent any risk of bleeding. A pressure dressing will then be applied. Once your condition has stabilized, you will be taken back to your room or to the outpatient cardiology clinic.

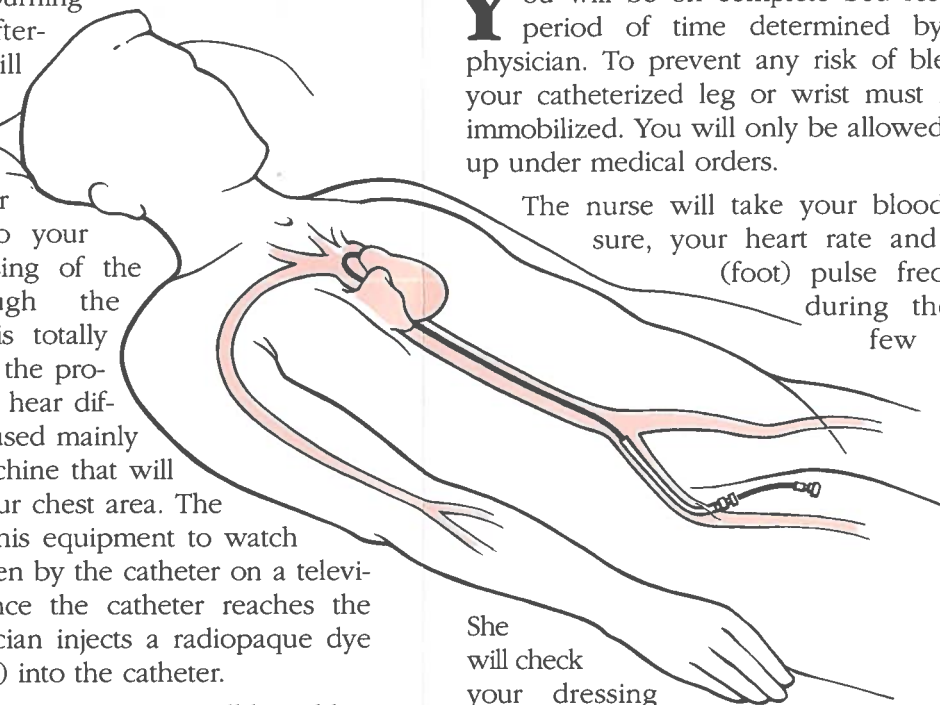
What follow-up care is required

You will be on complete bed rest for a period of time determined by your physician. To prevent any risk of bleeding, your catheterized leg or wrist must remain immobilized. You will only be allowed to get up under medical orders.

The nurse will take your blood pressure, your heart rate and pedal (foot) pulse frequently during the first few hours.

She will check your dressing to look for any signs of bleeding and will also evaluate the heat, colouring, sensitivity and motor functions of your leg or hand to make sure there is proper blood circulation.

You must inform us of any numbness. If you have to exert yourself or cough during the first 24 hours, apply pressure on your dressing to prevent any bleeding. You will



be allowed a light snack two to three hours after the test.

The first dressing will be removed before you leave the hospital. Do not be surprised if a bruise appears at the insertion site. This bruise can sometimes spread to the middle of the thigh. It will disappear gradually with time. Your physician will give you the test results and guidelines to follow the same days as soon as possible. When you are discharged from the hospital will depend on your results.

What you need to know when you are discharged

You will be able to resume your usual daily activities according to your tolerance level. However, avoid strenuous physical exertion for a 48-hour period. You may shower 48 hours after you return home or bathe 72 hours afterwards. Avoid using very hot water as it can trigger bleeding.

Take advantage of your hospital stay to obtain answers to all your questions regarding your diet, medication, return to work, resumption of physical and sexual activities, as well as your new prescriptions and appointments.

We strongly recommend that you follow Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. As well, you must stop smoking for good. Smoking is dangerous for your heart and causes irreversible damage to your health.

FOR THOSE ADMITTED FOR ONE-DAY TEST

You were recently informed that you would have to undergo a coronary angiography. According to your physician's recommendations, you must not eat or drink after midnight of the day before the test. You must also shave according to the guidelines in this document.

We strongly recommend that you be accompanied, as you will not be able to drive your car home. You must stay in a half-seated position on the trip home to avoid applying any pressure to the groin area. Make sure that someone stays with you until the next morning.

IMPORTANT

1. Stay lying down as much as possible until the following day. If the catheter was inserted in your groin area.
2. Do not make any effort with your leg or hand so as to prevent bleeding.
3. Check the test site and look for signs of bleeding every hour for the first four hours after you return home. After that, periodic monitoring sufficient.
4. If any bleeding occurs, apply pressure to the site for 20 to 30 mins until the bleeding has completely stopped, and continue to rest.

5. If the bleeding persists, if you feel acute pain or edema (a swelling bigger than an egg develops, go immediately to the emergency department where a physician will examine you.
6. Inform your physician if you observe any heat, redness and/or discharge at the catheter insertion site, if your temperature is higher than 38.5° C or if you are shivering.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

If you have any concerns or require additional information, do not hesitate to contact a nurse :

Unité 4° AC	24 / 24 h 338-2222 ext. 2024
Hémodynamique	weekdays between 8 a.m. and 17 h p.m. 338-2340
Clinique cardio	weekdays between 8 a.m. and 16h p.m 338-2222 ext. 3408
Info santé	24 / 24



HÔPITAL DU SACRÉ-COEUR
DE MONTRÉAL

Direction des services professionnels
et hospitaliers

CORONARY ANGIOGRAPHY

User's Name :

Physician's Name :

The nurses
from the outpatient
cardiology clinic
with hemodynamics
departement

AFFILIÉ À
Université 
de Montréal

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