



Cardiac Catherization: Coronary Angiography

Brief Description of Procedure:

A coronary angiogram is a procedure that involves the insertion of a catheter into an artery in the arm or the leg, which is then advanced to the arteries in the heart. The physician then injects a dye through the catheter that allows them to create x-ray images of the heart's blood vessels. During this procedure, the physician is able to determine whether the arteries in the heart have significant blockages. Sometimes, the physician may perform angioplasty and stenting during a coronary angiogram. During an angioplasty procedure, the physician advances a balloon through the catheter and places it in the vessel at the blockage site. The physician then inflates the balloon and the blockage is compressed against the walls of the artery. Usually, a small spring-like device called a stent is then deployed in the vessel at the site of the blockage to further aid in keeping the artery open.

Why Am I Having this Procedure?

During the aging process and due to risk factors for coronary artery disease, plaque grows on arterial walls as cholesterol circulates in the blood. As the plaque enlarges, the arteries become narrow and stiff and blood flow to the heart muscle is compromised. To find out the extent of the blockages that exist in the coronary arteries, physicians use this test. The resulting pictures help your physician pinpoint the location and extent of problems with the heart's blood supply and decide on treatment.

Please call our office with additional questions.