



Venography (Venogram)

This brochure tells you about a Venogram, the benefits and the risks, what happens before, during and after having a Venogram.

What is a Venogram?

A venogram uses injection of a contrast dye and a special type of x-ray called fluoroscopy to take pictures of the veins in your body, mostly your legs or arms.

It is sometimes used to look for blood clots called deep vein thrombosis (DVT). (An ultrasound would usually be used to look for DVT but if the results are unclear a venogram is done).

Benefits associated with a Venogram

- Used for diagnosis to show pictures of inside your veins.
- Can be used to find a suitable vein for some types of surgery.

Risks associated with a Venogram

Your doctor knows the risks of a venogram and will advise you whether the benefits outweigh any possible risk. Possible risks are:

- Not recommended for pregnant women
- Not recommended for patients who are diabetic
- Not recommended for patients with kidney problems
- Small amount of radiation. The amount of radiation you are exposed to depends on the number of pictures taken and the part of the body being examined.
- **Extremely small** chance you could develop cancer in the long term from the radiation.
- An allergic reaction from the dye. You may have nausea, sneezing, vomiting, itching, hives and dizziness. More serious reactions can occur, but are very rare.
- Infection at the site of an injection

If you are at all concerned regarding the risks, talk to your doctor before the examination.

Preparation for a Venogram

- Bring your referral letter or request form and all x-rays taken in the last 2 years with you.
- Leave the x-rays with the radiology staff as the doctor may need to look at them. The staff will tell you when these are ready to be picked up.
- Wear comfortable, loose clothing.
- Leave all jewellery and valuables at home.
- You may be asked not to eat or drink for a few hours before the venogram.

Important to tell your doctor before the scan

- If you are or may be pregnant.
- About any medical conditions you have, including kidney disease, bleeding disorders, allergies and asthma.
- If you are taking blood thinning medications, such as aspirin.

Just before the Venogram:

- You will be given a gown to wear during the procedure.
- You will be asked to remove any metal objects.
- A pen may be used to mark where your pulses are on the part of your body being looked at.

Consent

You have the right to refuse an examination and may do so if you wish. You may be asked to complete a consent form.

What happens during the Venogram?

The staff will ask you to lie on the bed on your back. Staff will put a needle into the part of the body they are looking at.

- A salt water fluid may be passed through the needle so that it does not become blocked before the dye is injected.

Possible side effects of 'dye':

- You may feel a slight coolness and a flushing for a few seconds.
- Part of your body may feel warm - if this bothers you, tell the staff.

A tight band (tourniquet) may be put on the part of the body they are looking at to control blood flow.

Once you are ready, the staff will go behind a screen or into the next room to start the x-ray machine. They will ask you to be still, and may ask you take a deep breath and hold your breath during the procedure.

When the procedure is finished you will be asked to wait while the staff check the pictures, as you may need more x-rays.

The venogram including getting you ready takes between 30 minutes to one hour.

When will I get the results?

The amount of time it takes for you to get your results will differ depending on where you get your scans done. The radiology doctor will look at the pictures and write a report. The pictures may be on films or on a CD.

Ask whether you should wait to take the pictures and report with you, or whether they will be sent to your doctor.

Your doctor will need to discuss the report with you. You will need to make an appointment to do this.

After the Venogram

After the venogram the staff will check your breathing and heart rate, and blood pressure a few times. Staff will also check the temperature, colour and sensation in the part of your body that the dye was injected into.

If you had 'dye':

- Staff will need to take out the needle if it is still in your arm.
- Staff will give you any special instructions
- The dye will pass out of your body in your urine. You will not notice it as it is colourless.
- Drink plenty of fluid to help get rid of the dye.

You will be able to go soon after the venogram is finished and can usually continue with normal activities. The radiology doctor will tell you if there are any special instructions.

If you had a sedative:

- **Staff will need to take out the needle if it is still in your arm.**
- **You must not drive a car or take public transport and must have someone with you for 24 hours afterwards.**
- **You must not operate machinery on the day of the procedure**

Costs

The costs of the venogram will depend on exactly what is needed and where it is performed. When you ring to book your venogram, you may wish to ask if it will cost you anything. Otherwise, you can ask staff when you go to have your scan.

Further Information

For more detailed information, please see [Inside Radiology](#), a resource produced especially for consumers by the [Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists](#).

If you would like to look at other relevant brochures, please see

- [Radiation risks of x-rays and scans](#)

Or log into the Diagnostic Imaging Pathways website - www.imagingpathways.health.wa.gov.au/includes/consumer.html

or

If you have questions or require any further information please contact your doctor or speak to the staff where you are going to have your procedure.

Consumer Participation

This information has been reviewed by representatives from the following groups:

- Aboriginal people
- People with disabilities
- Seniors
- CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse)
- The Health Consumers' Council.

Feedback

The Division of Imaging Services, Royal Perth Hospital is committed to providing a friendly and professional service. If you would like to provide feedback on this information sheet, please send to:

Quality Coordinator
Imaging Services
Royal Perth Hospital
GPO Box X2213
Perth WA 6000

References

Venogram, Procedure Overview, www.cooperhealth.org

Website

For more information go to www.imagingpathways.health.wa.gov.au

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