

Radiology Department

Superior Vena Cava and Inferior Vena Cava Venogram

Information for patients



This leaflet gives you further information that will add to the discussion you have with your doctor about the procedure called Superior Vena Cava and Inferior Vena Cava Venogram.

What is superior vena cava and inferior vena cava venogram?

A venogram (same as angiogram but specific to veins) is a special X-ray of the blood vessels (veins) in your chest or tummy. It identifies abnormalities in the vessels. You may come into hospital either as a day case patient or an inpatient depending on your circumstances and the reasons you are having this procedure performed.

What happens before the procedure?

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and a cannula will be placed into one or both of your hand or arm vessels in case you need medications during the test. You can eat and drink and take your insulin and most other medications as normal before the test.

If you take metformin you should have your last dose the day before the test and not take it again until 48 hours after the test. If you take warfarin please contact the Radiology Department (Tel: 01865 220800 and ask for the nurse) as this may need to be stopped a few days before your procedure. Please bring all medications with you into hospital and alert the nurse to any allergies you may have, if you have hay fever, diabetes, heart disease or kidney disease.

What does the procedure involve?

This procedure is performed in the X-ray department by a qualified doctor called a radiologist. Local anaesthetic is injected into the insertion site either at the top of your leg or into the veins in both arms. This stings but then the area goes numb. A small tube is placed into the vein and a clear liquid called contrast media (that shows up on X-ray) is injected through the tube into your blood vessels, and continuous X-rays are taken. This may cause a brief hot sensation within your body which is odd but not dangerous. The injection may

also make you feel as though you have passed urine, but this is not the case. Once the X-ray pictures are complete the tube in the vein is removed and the doctor will apply to the puncture site to stop any bleeding.

What happens after the test?

If you have had a tube placed in the groin you will be moved back onto your bed and asked to lie flat for 30 minutes. You will be transferred back to the ward or Day Case Unit. A nurse will check your blood pressure, heart rate and puncture site before you are discharged. You will be given discharge information before you leave hospital.

If you have had contrast dye injected from the arms you will not need to lie flat in bed but we will ask you to stay in the waiting area for 30 minutes to make sure there are no delayed side-effects from the X-ray dye.

The first 24 hours after the test

For the first 24 hours we advise you to drink plenty of fluids, and to relax quietly and eat normally. If you have any concerns you should contact your GP, A&E or the nursing team in the Radiology Department on 01865 220800. You should not operate machinery or do strenuous lifting for the next day. You should drive when you feel comfortable in the groin.

What should you do if the puncture site starts to bleed at home?

In this unlikely event, stop what you are doing and lie down. Put pressure with your fingers on the site and press very firmly. Call 999 for an ambulance and say that you have had a venogram and the site is bleeding. Pressure needs to be continually applied (by you or someone else) until help arrives.

What are the risks of having a venogram?

Bruising at the puncture site is common but should disappear in a few days. Bleeding from the puncture site occurs infrequently. Rarely the blood vessel may be damaged which may worsen your symptoms or cause bleeding. The consenting doctor will explain other rare complications before the procedure. Remember your doctor has recommended this procedure because s(he) believes that the benefits outweigh the risks.

How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, you may telephone the radiology nursing team on 01865 220800.

Further information

www.rcr.ac.uk – Royal College of Radiologists

www.bsir.org – British Society of Interventional Radiology

www.vascularsociety.org.uk – Vascular Society of the United Kingdom

www.cirse.org – Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@orh.nhs.uk**

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