Care Gram

Myelogram

Date of Test: _____ Test Time: _____

Welcome
Welcome to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Radiology Department. Your doctor has requested a myelogram. A myelogram is an X-ray that uses a contrast agent to look at the spinal cord and the space around it (called subarachnoid space). The test is performed by a radiologist – a doctor specialized in medical diagnosis by X-ray, and a radiographer – a person certified in the use of X-ray equipment.

How the Test Works
The contrast agent is put in the subarachnoid space around the spinal cord through a small needle placed into an area on your back. The table that you will lay on will be tilted. This will help the contrast flow up and down the spinal canal. X-rays are taken to ensure the contrast has highlighted the spinal canal. The contrast helps the radiologist view areas that cannot be seen on X-ray, CT scan, or MRI. Following the myelogram, you will be taken to the CT area for more imaging.

Common uses for the test:
- To find a slipped disk (herniated or ruptured disk)
- To find out if surgery is needed
- To view bone spurs in people with spinal arthritis
- To locate narrowing within the open spaces in the spine (spinal stenosis)
- To show tumors
- To find cancer and decide the best treatment
- To show infection, inflammation, abnormal blood vessels, and traumatic (painful) injuries

Allowing Time
The test takes about 30 to 60 minutes. If you have other tests scheduled, you may be there longer. Plan on staying in the Hospital after your test for 4 hours or longer for observation and recovery.

Registering
You will receive a phone call from the Radiology Department to verify your appointment time. During this call, the technologist will discuss blood thinners and ask you to arrive an hour early for blood work. Please report to the Radiology Department on the LMH First Floor one hour prior to testing for blood work.

Preparation

1. Please bring a current list of medicines with you on the day of your procedure.

2. If you are taking blood-thinning medicines, ask your doctor about stopping use of these drugs prior to your myelogram. You should stop taking the following medication prior to your test:
   - Aspirin, Motrin®, or other NSAIDS – stop taking this medication 7 days prior to your test.
   - Coumadin® – stop taking this medication 5 days prior to your test.
   - Plavix® – stop taking this medication 7 days prior your test.
   - Xarelto® – stop taking this medication for 7 days prior to your test.
   - Eliquis® – stop taking this medication for 5 days prior to your test.
   - Lovenox® – stop taking this medication for 24 hours prior to your test.
   - Heparin® – stop taking this medication for 4 hours prior to your test.

   Check with the doctor if you are taking a blood-thinning medication not on this list. Also, you will be required to have a lab test prior to the procedure to evaluate the blood coagulation.

3. If you have any questions about your test, please call (220) 564-4710.

Your Role

1. Relax during the test. It is important to be still and hold your breath when asked.
2. Let the doctor know if you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant before the test.

During a Myelogram

- The test will be done in the Radiology Department. The radiologist will obtain a signed consent. After the test, you will go to the Outpatient Surgery area for your recovery time.
- You will be asked to change into a gown and robe. You will be laying face down on the table. The radiologist will choose the best place for the needle and clean the skin around that area.
- A local numbing medicine (anesthetic) is injected at the site, and you may feel a sting. The spinal needle is injected, and you may feel pressure.
- Special medicine called a contrast agent will be put through the needle into the spine.
- Please let the radiographer know if you feel pain in your head, back, or legs.

After the Test

- The needle is removed from your back and a small bandage is applied.
- You will need to sit at a 35-degree angle while you recover. It is a good idea to drink fluids during this time.
- You will need to have someone drive you home from the Hospital. It would be best if that person could also stay with you through the night.
- The contrast agent will come out through your urine and should not discolor your urine or bowel movements.
- For 1 to 2 days, do not bend over, do hard physical work, or play.

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After you go home, call your doctor if you have:

- Fever higher than 100.4º F
- Nausea and vomiting (feel sick to your stomach)
- Bad headaches for more than 24 hours
- Neck stiffness
- Numbness in your legs
- Problems going to the bathroom

Finding Out the Results

The radiologist will study your test and give the findings to your doctor. Your doctor should receive the report 24 to 48 hours after your test. Your doctor will talk to you about the results and your options.

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