Cerebral Angiography

An information leaflet for patients

Neurosurgery
Neurosciences

Produced: June 2009
Review date: June 2012
Why do I need a cerebral angiogram?

Your consultant has requested us to perform an examination of the blood vessels of the brain. This examination is referred to as a cerebral angiogram. Other tests may have provided useful information, but a cerebral angiogram gives the most detailed images of the blood vessels of the brain.

How long will it take?

A cerebral angiogram takes about one and a half hours to perform. However, you will be required to stay in hospital overnight after the procedure.

Where will it take place?

A cerebral angiogram will be performed in the Neuro X-ray department at Royal Preston Hospital.

Who will perform the cerebral angiogram?

It will be performed by or supervised by a consultant neuro radiologist, who is an expert in this procedure. Other staff who may be involved in the procedure include Anaesthetists, Anaesthetic practitioners, Radiographers and Nurses.

How do I prepare for a cerebral angiogram?

A cerebral angiogram needs to be performed in hospital. You may be required to stay in hospital the night before the procedure. If this is not necessary, you will be given instructions on what to eat and drink at home before coming into hospital. On the day of the procedure, you will be asked to put on a hospital gown. As the procedure is carried out through the femoral artery in the groin, you may be asked to shave the skin around this area.

What actually happens during a cerebral angiogram?

You will be asked to lie flat on your back on the x-ray table. The anaesthetist may inject a sedative into one of your veins to help you sleep through the procedure. If you do not wish to have this, please inform the anaesthetist. Monitoring equipment will be attached to your chest, arm and finger. You may also be given oxygen from a mask during the procedure. The skin around the groin area is then cleaned using antiseptic, and the rest of your body is covered with sterile sheets. Local anaesthetic will be injected into the groin on your right side. This will sting for a short time, and then the area will become numb. If the right femoral artery cannot be used, the left femoral artery will be used instead. Once numb, a fine needle will be inserted into the femoral artery in the groin. Through this, a long fine tube called a catheter will be introduced and guided to the main blood vessels, which supply blood to the brain. A dye containing iodine will be injected through the catheter and a series of X-rays will be taken.
Will the procedure hurt?

When the local anaesthetic is injected, it will sting, but this soon wears off and the skin and deeper tissues should become numb. The x-ray dye injected can make some people feel warm and heavy on one side, but this passes very quickly. The procedure can take one and a half hours and some people can become uncomfortable lying flat. The anaesthetic team are on hand to help with pain relieving medication if you require them.

What happens afterwards?

You will be taken back to the ward on your bed. Nurses on the ward will carry out routine observations, such as pulse and blood pressure to make sure that there are no problems. They will also look at the skin around the groin to ensure there is no bleeding. All you have to do is rest.

Are there any risks or complications?

We will take all the necessary precautions to perform this procedure with great care and to reduce the incidence of these side effects. Please note that this information leaflet is designed to give an overview of the experience that you will go through during a cerebral angiogram. It is intended to support and inform further discussion and explanation between yourselves and doctors prior to giving consent. If you have any further questions please ask to speak to a consultant neuro radiologist.

This examination is an invasive procedure, and side effects or complications may occur. The most common is to find that you have a bruising in the groin where the catheter was inserted. This will usually be a small bruise. However, some people can have a major bruise involving most of the upper thigh and the groin. This may take a few days or in extreme cases several weeks to disappear. Some people complain of a headache for a few hours after the examination. This may occasionally last for a few days. Sometimes when you wake up after the examination you may find that you are unable to see clearly and some people complain of blurred vision for a few hours. Occasionally people develop an allergic reaction to the dye used in this procedure, but this is rare. Rarely, people do not have the ability to speak clearly or find that they are unable to move one or more of their limbs after the procedure. These are usually temporary complications, which pass after a few hours. However, in very rare cases, permanent loss of speech, vision or use of limbs may occur.
Sources of further information:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
www.patient.co.uk

Other sources of information and help
info@neurologicalalliance.org.uk
www.brainandspine.org.uk
www.headway.org.uk

Contact Numbers
Ward 2a 01772 522217
Ward 2b 01772 22713

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information or need it in a different format</td>
<td>如果你需要帮助使能明白这些信息的内容，或者需要另一种的格式，请你提出这个要求。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Na życzenie możemy zapewnić pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji lub udostępnić je w innym formacie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Por favor díganos si necesita ayuda para entender esta información o la necesita en un formato diferente.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gujarati</th>
<th>Russian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>जो तम्य आ माण्जकोटी पीछँ कोई सशक्तन तथा समज्याथि मद्द जोईती होय अथवा ते बीजा कोई स्थलम जोईती होय, तो कृपया कररून करो.</td>
<td>Скажите нам, если Вам необходимо объяснение этой информации или она нужна Вам в другом формате.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>