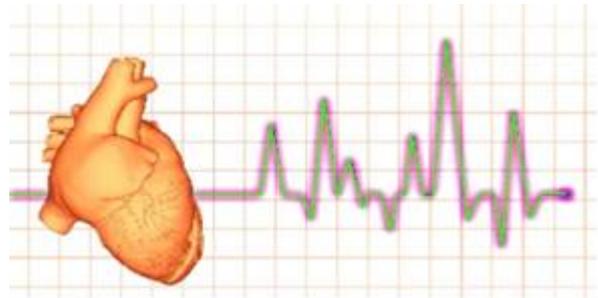


## Coronary Angiography

Coronary angiography is a specialized X-ray test to find out detailed information about your heart (coronary) arteries. It is mainly used if you have angina, to assess the extent and severity of the angina. It involves a procedure called catheterization.



### Information for those awaiting coronary angiography

It is important to call the doctor if your chest pain changes in character while you're waiting for coronary angiography. It may for example be that the chest pain or heart problems comes at rest, at other times or situations. Do not hesitate to contact us!

- Call cardiac clinic “Hjärtmottagningen” 0470-58 81 50
- or medical advice” Vårdguiden” 1177
- in severe or acute heart problems, call 112

### Understanding the arteries of the heart?

The heart is a muscle that pumps blood into the blood vessels (arteries) which take the blood to all parts of the body. Like any other muscle, the heart muscle, myocardium, needs a good blood supply. It is coronary arteries that are responsible for supplying the heart muscle with oxygen-rich blood.

### Preparing for coronary angiography

- You may need an ECG, which records the heart's rhythm and that can show if you have had a heart attack before.
- Prior to the test, blood tests are taken to check your blood count, salt balance and renal function. A small intravenous catheter will be inserted in your arm. This catheter is used to administer medications or drip if needed. You can ask for sedatives prior to the test.
- If you take a 'blood-thinning' drug (anticoagulant), such as warfarin, then you are likely to need to stop this for 2-3 days before the test. (This prevents excessive bleeding from the site of the small, flexible tube (catheter) insertion. INR value is measured. If it is too high, the test may have to be postponed a few days.
- If you take pills for diabetes containing the substance metformin, you should stop taking the medication before the test. Otherwise there is a risk of kidney dysfunction. Diabetes drugs that contains metformin is Glucophage® and Avandamet ®. Ask your doctor when you can start taking it again. Usually a blood sample is taken before you start taking the medicine again.
- If you may be pregnant, you need to tell the doctor who will do the test.
- You may be asked to stop eating and drinking for a few hours before the test.
- You may be asked to shave both groins before the test.

## How is coronary angiography done?

You lie on a couch in a catheterisation room. An X-ray machine is mounted above the couch. A thin, flexible tube (a catheter) is inserted through a wide needle or small cut in the skin into a blood vessel in the groin or arm. Your doctor will decide which is best. Local anaesthetic is injected into the skin above the blood vessel. Therefore, it should not hurt when the catheter is passed into the blood vessel. The doctor gently pushes the catheter up the blood vessel towards the heart. You are awake all the time and can talk to the staff. You may be able to see the progress of the test on the TV-screen. The test usually takes between 30 and 60 minutes.

## Different results

Results may vary from normal, narrowing, or blockage in the coronary arteries.

## What treatment may be considered?

Appropriate treatment depends on the results of coronary angiography, other investigation, past illnesses and current illnesses. Various treatments that may be considered are:

- Drug treatment.
- Coronary angioplasty; it is a procedure where a narrowed section of a heart (coronary) artery is widened by using a balloon and a stent attached to a catheter.
- Coronary artery surgery, so-called bypass surgery.

## After the test

- The doctor will discuss what he or she found during the test. A letter is also sent to the doctor who send you to the test, giving details of the test results.
- You will need to rest for a few hours after the test. Most people are able to resume their normal activities the next day.
- You may need to have some stitches removed after about seven days if a small cut was made to insert the catheter.
- You may be discharged at the same day if the test is planned, and if you have not had to undergo angioplasty. If you have done the test urgently due to acute illness, such as for a heart attack, you may be stay a day or two.
- Ask your doctor when it is advisable to drive again.

## Are there any risks or side-effects?

It is very uncommon to have serious complications after coronary angiography. But although they may be occur, usually with mild symptoms. Most side-effects are mild and may include:

- A bruise, which may form under the skin where the small, flexible tube (catheter) was inserted (usually the groin). This is not serious, but it may be sore for a few days.
- The small wound where the catheter is inserted sometimes becomes infected. Tell your doctor if the wound becomes red and tender. A short course of antibiotics may be needed in this case.
- Some people get a short angina-type pain during angiography. This soon goes.
- The dye may give you a hot, flushing feeling when it is injected. Many people also describe a warm feeling in the groin when the dye is injected. Some people have an allergic reaction to the dye, but it is rarely and can be treated.

## Rare complications:

Serious complications are rare, but do sometimes occur. For example, some people have a stroke or a heart attack (myocardial infarction) during the procedure. Your doctor will only recommend coronary angiography if they feel the benefits outweigh the small risk.

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### References:

[www.patient.co.uk/health/coronary-angiography](http://www.patient.co.uk/health/coronary-angiography)

[www.1177.se/Kronoberg/Fakta-och-rad/Undersokningar/Kranskarlsrontgen](http://www.1177.se/Kronoberg/Fakta-och-rad/Undersokningar/Kranskarlsrontgen)