

McLAREN FLINT

# POST CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION

Cardiac catheterization is an imaging procedure that allows your doctor to determine if you have any coronary artery disease and evaluate the heart muscle function to determine the need for further treatment.

Pre-heart cath testing can include several different procedures, such as performing a stress test, basic lab work, family history, cardiac CT and EKG results. These and other tests may bring your doctor to the conclusion that they need to take a closer look at your heart.

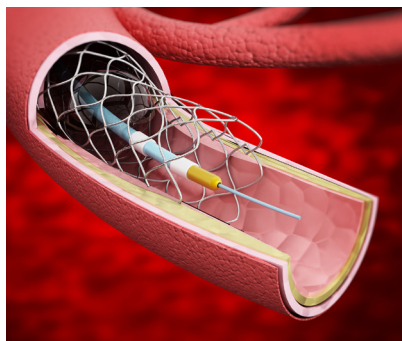
Cardiac catheterization is that closer look. Through cardiac catheterization we are able to look directly at the blood vessels that are supplying the oxygenated blood to your heart.

During cardiac catheterization, a tiny access site is made at the groin (at the top of the thigh) in the femoral artery or at the wrist into the radial artery. A small protective tube (sheath) is inserted, and that becomes the working area.

Through the sheath a doctor will insert a long narrow tube, known as a catheter, and guide that catheter directly to the arteries that supply the blood flow to the heart.

Once this catheter is in place, we are able to inject small amounts of IV dye into the coronary arteries. This IV dye is visible under X-ray, so the doctor can closely look at the blood flow of your coronary arteries to visualize if there are any blockages.

Sometimes there are areas that don't have perfect flow, but there remains enough good blood flow to the heart that medication is the best option. Other times the arteries of the heart



have enough blockage that requires "fixing." We can fix blockages with a balloon or a stent.

## POST PROCEDURE

After the catheterization you will want to take it easy for the next 48 hours. Your access site was in an artery. If you notice any bleeding or swelling in the area, seek medical attention. Keep an eye on the access site and try to avoid anything that would put a strain on that area. Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds for at least 48 hours. You should be able to return to most normal activities by the end of one week.

Drink plenty of water to help clear your body of the IV contrast dye. The dye is hard on your kidneys and the water helps to flush it out of your system. Avoid anything that would dehydrate you.

Your doctor will give you detailed instructions with the medications they want you to take. It is very important that you follow these instructions. Don't ever stop taking the medications your cardiologist puts you on without discussing it with them first.

Call your cardiologist or seek medical attention if:

- You notice bleeding, new bruising or swelling at the catheter site
- You develop increasing pain or discomfort at the catheter site
- You have signs of infection, such as redness, drainage or a fever
- There's a change in temperature or color of the leg or arm that was used for the procedure
- Weakness or numbness in the leg or arm where the catheter was inserted
- You develop chest pain or shortness of breath