

MYELOGRAM

This pamphlet has been designed by the health care professionals of Marquette General Hospital to provide you with information about having a myelogram and answer your questions about this exam. When you have finished reading this pamphlet, you should be able to discuss:

- what a myelogram is
- what preparation is needed
- what actions can be taken to prevent or reduce any side effects after the exam

OUTPATIENTS-

-You should bring the following to the hospital:

- any previous x-rays of your back
- the order for the exam from your doctor
- something to do or read
- slippers and a robe(in the event that you are admitted)

-You can expect to be in the hospital until your exam(s) are completed-about 1-2 hours. If you develop any side effects from the exam, you may be admitted overnight for observation.

-You will need to make arrangements for someone to drive you home

WHAT IS A MYELOGRAM?

A myelogram is a special x-ray exam to study your spinal column. Reasons for having a myelogram might include ruptured discs, spinal cord abnormalities and other injuries or diseases of the spinal cord. The doctor performing the exam uses a local anesthetic to numb a small area of your spine. The contrast medium(a special clear fluid that shows up on an x-ray) is injected through a small needle puncture into your spinal canal(a fluid filled space along your spine) and x-rays are taken.

PREPARING FOR A MYELOGRAM

Diet- you may have your normal diet until 3 hours before, then only liquids until the exam.

Medications- you may take your daily medications, unless advised otherwise and bring a list of your daily medications with you to the Radiology Department.

IV Allergies- notify your doctor or nurse if you have ever had an allergic reaction(such as hives, rash, facial swelling, or breathing problems) from IV contrast. If so, you may need to have special medication starting that day before the exam. This contrast is used for kidney studies(IVP), CT scans, myelograms, heart catheterizations, and studies of the arteries or veins.

THE PROCEDURE

You will be wearing a hospital gown or pajamas.

The exam will be explained and your written permission obtained.

You will be positioned and secured face down on the x-ray table.

The area on your back where the contrast will be injected is shaved, cleansed with antiseptic, covered with sterile towel and numbed with a local anesthetic.

While contrast is being injected, you may feel a pressure sensation, but minimal discomfort.

After the contrast is injected, x-rays will be taken.

A band-aid is placed over the puncture site.

Your doctor may also want you to have a CT scan of your spine. If so, the myelogram along with the CT scan will take about an hour.

The results of your exam will be explained to you by your doctor.

OUTPATIENTS HOME INSTRUCTIONS

To help prevent problems such as a headache, follow these instructions for 24 hours after your myelogram:

- rest
- avoid strenuous activity, heavy lifting, rapid movements or bending over at the waist
- drink lots of fluids
- avoid baths, whirlpools, or swimming

You may need to make work or scheduling arrangements if any of the above instructions will interfere with your job or daily activities.

If you are not experiencing any side effects and your doctor has no plans to admit you after your myelogram, you can be discharged with your driver.

Your driver will need to be available to sign the discharge instructions.

The morning after your myelogram, provided you are not experiencing any problems, you may resume driving.

If you have any questions, please call the Radiology Department at: (906)225-3540 or 1-800-562-9753, ext 3540

Additional health information is available through the Health Information Center (906)225-4950 or 1-800-562-9753 ext 4950.