

Cerebral Angiography

A cerebral angiogram performed in the Medical Imagine (X-ray) Department. This is a procedure that is commonly performed to investigate patients who have experienced a stroke (weakness, loss of speech, numbness, or paralysis caused by abnormal blood flow to the brain). The angiogram requires the injection of x-ray contrast ("dye") through a catheter (a long thin plastic tube) into the blood vessels that supply blood to the brain. Most often we insert the angiography catheter into the blood vessel at the top of the leg or wrist after the injection of local anesthetic ("freezing"). The procedure is done using sterile preparation of the biopsy site. As an outpatient you will be admitted and discharged from the hospital on the same day through the Medical Imaging Department. You will be discharged from the hospital approximately 4-6 hours after your angiogram has been completed. You must stay in Saskatoon the evening following your procedure, within a 15- minute drive of hospital Emergency Department. Please be aware that City Hospital Emergency Department closes at 8:30 pm. If all is well you may return home the next day. The risks of cerebral angiography include:

1. Bleeding at the site of catheter insertion after the test is over. Delayed bleeding is very uncommon but it is the major reason you will be observed for 4 - 6 hours after your angiogram is completed.
2. "Allergy" to x-ray contrast ("dye") - A serious life-threatening "allergic" type reaction occurs in approximately 1/50,000 to 1/150,000 people. This is very rare. You should discuss any allergy history with your doctor prior to booking an angiogram.
3. Cold, numb, or painful foot - Very rarely the blood vessel the catheter was inserted into becomes blocked and prevents blood from going to your lower leg and foot. This would require an emergency operation to reopen the blocked blood vessel.
4. Stroke - This is the most significant risk of cerebral angiography. The chance of developing a permanent stroke (weakness, numbness, or paralysis) as the result of a cerebral angiogram is less than 0.5%.

Please inform your physician of any allergies you may have. In particular, if you have had allergic reactions to x-ray contrast ("dye") in the past.