Information about your Heart Procedure at Toronto General Hospital

Welcome to the UHN Peter Munk Cardiac Centre

Your procedure is scheduled at Toronto General Hospital (TGH)
Information about your Cardiac Procedure

You are booked for a Cardiac procedure on:

DATE: ____________________________________________
TIME: ____________________________________________

Please take MUNK or EATON elevators and check in at the desk in Cath Lab/CVICU/CICU waiting room (2nd Floor)

University Avenue entrance: take MUNK elevators to 2nd floor and follow arrows.
Elizabeth Street entrance: take EATON elevators to 2nd floor and follow arrows.
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Information about Toronto General Hospital

Your doctor recommended that you have a procedure called **heart catheterization**. This is also called a **heart angiogram**.

You have been registered in the provincial Cardiac Care Network of Ontario database as a patient waiting for this test. This registry helps to make sure that all patients get timely access to cardiac (heart) care.

There is a chance that your heart procedure may be unexpectedly cancelled because of longer than expected procedure times, a patient’s condition and staff or bed availability. If this happens your heart procedure will be rescheduled at a later date.

After looking at your catheterization results, your doctor may decide you need an angioplasty. The angioplasty may be done on the same day or booked at a later date.
### What you need to know before your test

| Medicines | If you take a blood thinner such as Coumadin or Warfarin or you are not sure, call your doctor or the doctor arranging the test. Ask what you need to do about your blood thinner.  
|           | If you take pills such as Metformin or insulin for your diabetes, then call your family doctor or the doctor who is arranging your test. Ask what you will need to do about your medicines and breakfast on the day of the test. |
| Tests     | You will need to have a blood test within 90 days of your heart procedure. If this has not been arranged by 2 weeks before your test, then call your family doctor or the doctor arranging the heart procedure. |
| Bring someone | If you do not speak English, you must bring someone to interpret for you. They must be able to stay with you to interpret before and after the test. |
| Staying overnight | Arrange for someone to stay with you during the night at your home, after you have had your test. |
| Going home | You must have someone drive you home after the procedure.  
|           | You may go home by taxi if you have an escort. |
| Questions | If you have any questions, call your doctor’s office or the triage office at 416 340 5184.  
|           | If there are any changes in the booking of your test, you will be called by the doctor’s office.  
|           | If you must cancel your test, call both the doctor’s office and the triage office (at 416 340 5184) **48 hours in advance.** |
What you need to do before your procedure

☐ Take a shower or bath the night before or the morning of your test.

If your procedure time is in the morning:

☐ Do not have anything to eat or drink after midnight the night before your procedure.

    Except, you should take all your pills at normal times with a glass of water. Follow the doctor's orders for your blood thinner and diabetes pills.

If your procedure time is in the afternoon:

☐ Eat a small breakfast such as toast and juice by 7:00 am the morning of your test. After 7:00 am, do NOT have anything to eat or drink until after the procedure.

    Except, you should take all your pills at normal times with a glass of water. Follow the doctor’s orders for taking your blood thinner and diabetes pills.

What should I bring to the hospital?

☐ Bring your pills in their bottles.
☐ Bring your dentures, glasses, hearing aid, books to read and health card (OHIP).
☐ If you wish, bring a music listening device with headset.
☐ Please do NOT bring large amounts of money, slippers, pyjamas, food, jewellery or any other valuables. The hospital is not responsible for any theft or loss.
☐ Remember the hospital is a scent-free environment. No perfume or cologne please.

If there is a change in your health

Call the doctor who set up your test or go to the nearest hospital. If you have trouble reaching your doctor, or you need any other information, please call the Regional Cardiac Care Coordinator at 416 340 5184.
Where do I go when I get to the hospital?

• Eaton Building 2nd floor Cath Lab/CVICU/CICU waiting room
• If you need help, please call the Cardiac triage office at 416 340 5184.
• If you have trouble walking, arrange to be dropped off at the main door before parking.

What should I expect on the day of my procedure?

• Expect to wait before the test. The amount of waiting may vary.
• Expect to stay in bed for 3 to 6 hours after the procedure.
• Expect to spend most of the day in the hospital.
• Expect to go home the same day as the procedure unless your health care team gives you different instructions.

If you are coming from out of town

If you are coming from outside of the Toronto area, you may need to stay in the city overnight before or after your test.

Need more information?

Please ask your doctor if you have any questions about the heart procedure and its risks. A ‘risk’ is the chance that something might go wrong during the test. Please ask your nurse after your procedure if you need a list of hotels.

For more information, please visit www.uhn.ca/PMCC
1. Go to Clinic, Inpatients & Tests
2. Go to “Select a Clinic”
3. Choose Cardiovascular Investigations Unit (Cath Lab)
4. Scroll down to Health Information and click on your test to learn more
Understanding your heart catheterization

What is a heart catheterization?

A heart catheterization (also called an angiogram) helps your doctor get information about your heart. This includes how well your arteries work.

Your coronary arteries supply the heart muscle with blood. An angiogram takes pictures of your heart by injecting a dye into a catheter. A catheter is a hollow flexible tube made out of soft plastic.

How does your heart work?

You have major coronary arteries that supply your heart muscle with blood. Each main artery has many branches like the roots of a tree. A heart catheterization takes pictures of these arteries. This will help your doctor see your arteries better.
About the test or procedure

- We give you medicine to help you relax before you enter the lab.
- You will remain awake during the procedure.

A heart catheterization can be done in these 2 ways. Both ways are safe.

**Femoral Artery**
- A catheter is inserted through the femoral artery. The femoral artery is a large artery near your groin. If your doctor uses the femoral artery approach, the staff will remove hair from your groin.

**Brachial or Radial Artery**
- A catheter is inserted through either the brachial or radial artery in your arm. If your doctor uses the radial or brachial approach, the staff will remove hair from your arm.
How long will the procedure take?

You can expect the procedure to take between 20 to 40 minutes. This does not include the time it takes to get ready and the time it takes to recover.

Please arrange for the following:

• Be prepared to stay in the hospital all day.
• You must have someone take you home after your procedure.
• You must have someone stay with you for the night after your procedure.

What happens in the cardiac catheterization lab?

The catheterization is done in a lab. The lab is kept cool so the machines can work properly. You may feel cool in the lab.

During the procedure, the nurses check your heart rhythm and blood pressure. Sterile sheets are put on you to keep the insertion site sterile.

The doctor gives you an injection to numb the area where the catheter will be inserted. Your doctor inserts a hollow plastic guide (sheath) into the artery. While the sheath is being inserted, you may feel some pressure and tingling. This is normal.

After the sheath is inserted, your doctor inserts the catheter through the artery, which goes to the top of your heart. If you feel any pain or discomfort during the procedure, tell the doctor right away.

Your doctor injects a dye through the catheter that goes into your heart. You may feel a hot flash lasting about 30 seconds. This is normal. If you feel any pain or discomfort at this time, tell the doctor right away.
While the dye is moving though your heart, the doctor asks you to take a deep breath and hold it. Holding your breath helps get better pictures of your heart.

The doctor lets you know when you can breathe normally again.

After your doctor finishes taking pictures of your heart, the catheter is removed. The sheath may be removed in the lab or in the recovery room.

**What happens after the procedure?**

Once you return to the recovery area, the sheath is removed.

If your doctor used the femoral artery near your groin, a clamp is applied to the area where the catheter was put in.

If your doctor used your arm artery, another type of pressure is used. Applying pressure stops the bleeding and helps the area heal.

When you return from the lab, you lay flat on your back with your leg or arm straight. You **stay in this position for 3 to 6 hours before you are allowed to sit up.** This helps the area to heal.

One hour after the procedure, you can have something to eat and drink. A nurse checks your blood pressure and the pulses in your wrists and feet. The nurse also checks the area where the catheter was inserted.

**How will I get my results?**

When all the results come back, your doctor will talk with you about them.
Going home after your heart catheterization: discharge instructions

When can I take the bandage off my groin or wrist?
You can take the bandage off 24 hours after your angiogram.

Can my groin or wrist puncture site bleed once I get home?
• It should not bleed, but this does happen sometimes.
• If your site does start to bleed, lay down right away.
• Press firmly over the area until the bleeding stops.

If the bleeding does not stop, you must:
1. Keep pressing firmly over the area
2. Call 911

Can other problems happen?
You may have some discomfort. Use Tylenol or acetaminophen for any discomfort.

Call your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department if you have:
• A painful, cold, discoloured, swollen, enlarged or red leg or arm.
• A fever or pus-like discharge at the puncture site. A small amount of bruising at the site is normal.
• Sudden shortness of breath.
• Severe pain or swelling at your groin puncture site, your scrotal or pelvic area or in your lower stomach area above the puncture site.
Can I climb stairs?

Yes, you can climb stairs. Go slowly if you need to. Try to do your activities upstairs tasks together and your downstairs tasks together. This helps to reduce how many times you go up and down stairs.

Should I shower or bathe?

You may shower 24 hours after your procedure. Do NOT sit in a hot bath for the first 7 days after your procedure because this can cause the puncture site at your groin or wrist to bleed.

When can I start having sex again?

You can have sex 2 days after your procedure.

Can I lift heavy objects?

It takes time for your groin to heal after your angiogram. Do not lift, push or pull anything over 10 pounds for 1 week after your procedure. Things that are over 10 pounds would include children, heavy grocery bags, lawnmowers, vacuums and weights.

When can I return to work?

Ask your doctor. When you can return to work depends on the kind of work that you do. If you have a job where you sit, you can usually go back after 2 to 3 days.

If you have a job where you do heavy lifting, it will be longer.
**When can I get back to regular exercise?**

You may walk for the first 3 to 4 days after your procedure. Walk at an easy pace.

Stop if you get chest pain (angina) or become short of breath. **Do not do any heavy exercising during this time.**

Ask your doctor how much walking and exercise you should do.

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**When can I drive my car?**

You can drive your car 1 day after your angiogram. If you are traveling for long periods, stretch your legs every hour.

If you drive a commercial vehicle, ask your doctor when you can start driving again.

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**I am planning a trip. When can I travel by air?**

Talk to your cardiologist before you book your flight. Your cardiologist can tell you if you should not fly.
# About your nitroglycerine

If you have a prescription for nitroglycerine, always carry it with you. If you have angina, take your nitroglycerine immediately and follow these steps:

- Wait 5 minutes.
- If your angina is not gone after 5 minutes, take another nitroglycerine.
- Wait 5 minutes.
- If you still have angina, take a third nitroglycerine.
- Wait 5 minutes.
- If you still have angina, call 911 or have someone take you to the nearest emergency.
- **Do not drive yourself to the hospital.**

# Questions?

If you have any questions when you go home, you may call:

- the nurses on the Short Stay Unit at 416 340 3231
- the triage office at 416 340 5184
- the nurses in the Cath Lab at 416 340 4812
Heart disease risk factors

More information for patients diagnosed with heart disease or who want to learn more

These factors increase your chances of having heart disease:

1. Smoking
2. High blood pressure
3. High blood cholesterol levels
4. Diabetes
5. Obesity
6. Lack of Exercise
7. Stress
8. Family History

By changing some of these risk factors you can lower your chance of getting heart disease or slow down the disease if you already have it.

For more information, please visit [www.uhn.ca/PMCC](http://www.uhn.ca/PMCC)
1. Select “Patients & Families”
2. Go to ”PMCC Health Information”
3. Select the information you would like to review

Some helpful brochures to read on [www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca)

- Exercise Your Heart
- Healthy Eating
- High Blood Pressure
- Smoking: it’s never too late to quit
- Stress Reduction
- Understanding Your Medications
Heart rehabilitation helps all patients with heart conditions

Medical and nursing groups recommend that people who have been in hospital and diagnosed with a heart problem should do a heart rehabilitation program.

What are the goals of the heart rehabilitation program?

To help you:

• Improve your future health
• Prevent further heart problems
• Reduce your symptoms

Our heart rehabilitation program at the Toronto Western hospital

• Is a patient and family-focused outpatient clinic
• Has a home based exercise program
• Can help you to find a heart rehabilitation program close to home
• Is free

We teach you and your family about your heart condition. We also help you to:

1. Live a healthy life
2. Quit smoking
3. Exercise regularly
4. Eat healthy
5. Manage stress in your life
Our healthcare team is made up of:

- Clinical dietitian
- Registered Nurse
- Kinesiologist
- Exercise physiologist
- Pharmacist
- Doctor

Our healthcare team will work with you to help make sure your heart works the best it can. Please ask your cardiologist about a referral to the heart rehabilitation program.

**Where to find us?**

**Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation Program**
7 Fell Wing (Room 108)
Toronto Western Hospital
399 Bathurst Street
Phone: 416 603 5200

For more information, please visit [www.uhn.ca/PMCC](http://www.uhn.ca/PMCC)

1. Select “Patients & Families”
2. Go to Select a Clinic
3. In the Search by A-Z drop-down menu choose Cardiac Rehab –
   Toronto Western