

## Having an angioplasty

X-Ray Department  
Tel: 01271 311869

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio tape or computer disk, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

### What is an angioplasty?

An angioplasty is a procedure in which a narrowed or blocked artery is opened up with a special balloon. It is carried out in the X-Ray Department.

### Why is it needed?

The doctor in the clinic will have explained the reasons why you need this procedure. However, if you don't understand, please ask.

### How long will it take?

This procedure may last anything between 30 minutes to 1 hour.

### Where is it done?

Your angioplasty will be done in the Radiology Department on level 2 at the North Devon District Hospital. Please register at the Radiology A reception.

### How to find us

If you come through the main hospital entrance, take the second corridor on your right (just before the coffee shop). Continue half way down the corridor and then take a left turn to the Radiology A reception desk.

### What special preparations are needed?

You may have had blood forms in the post to check your blood clotting before the angioplasty is carried out. This is to check that the blood-clotting process is normal and reduces further the risk of bleeding. **If you have received these forms with your appointment letter, please arrange to have the blood tests done at your GP surgery or medical centre a few days before your appointment.**

If you are on anticoagulants such as warfarin, or anti-platelets such as clopidogrel, we recommend you discuss this with your doctor as soon as possible to ensure the correct drug regime is in place for your angioplasty. You may need to stop taking these drugs a few days before your angioplasty.

A radiology nurse will phone you approximately a week before your appointment to complete a pre-assessment and answer any questions you may have about your angioplasty.

Please contact the X-Ray Department on **01271 311869**, Monday to Friday, between 9am and 1pm, for advice if you:

- have any abnormal bleeding or problem with blood clotting
- have had the dye previously and think you may be allergic to it

If you –

- **have diabetes requiring treatment by tablet or injection, please contact the diabetes nurse on 01271 322726, Monday to Friday, between 9am and 11am, for advice.**
- have high blood pressure and have not had it checked in the last year, please ask your GP or practice nurse to check this. If your blood pressure is high, we may not be able to do the operation because of the risk of bleeding or bruising.

**You can have a light breakfast, for example tea and toast, on the morning of your procedure up to 6am.**

You should arrive in Radiology A on the morning of your angioplasty. You will be seen by the nursing team and prepared for your procedure.

## Before the test

The specialist will see you on the day of the examination. You will then be able to ask any questions or discuss any concerns that you may have.

### Consent

**You will also be asked to sign a consent form** to allow the procedure to be carried out.

This leaflet has been written to enable you to make an informed decision in relation to agreeing to the treatment.

**The consent form is an important legal document, therefore please read it carefully.**

Once you have read and understood all the information, including the possibility of complications and you agree to undergo the investigation, please sign and date the consent form. You will notice that the consent form is duplicated, allowing you to keep a copy for your records.

## What does it involve?

During the procedure we will monitor your blood pressure and pulse. This is routine.

The doctor will inject some local anaesthetic into your groin to numb the area. This will make the procedure more comfortable. A small plastic tube called a catheter will then be placed in the artery in your groin. X-ray dye is injected through it and pictures of the narrowed artery are taken. Following this a small balloon is inflated inside the narrowed artery to try to open it up.

At the end of the procedure, the catheter and wire are removed. It is usually possible to seal the small hole left in the artery with a special closure device (angioseal), but occasionally direct manual pressure over the artery is required instead.

## What happens after the test?

We will take you into Radiology Recovery and check your blood pressure, pulse, wound site and the colour and sensation in your feet every 15 minutes for an hour, then every 30 minutes for two hours.

After two hours you can get up and sit in a chair for 30 minutes and then get dressed and move about for 30 minutes.

If there are no problems you can go home.

If you have no-one at home, we will arrange an overnight bed in hospital for you.

## How will I feel afterwards?

After an angioplasty, some people notice tenderness and bruising in the groin. This should settle down in a few days. If your groin is uncomfortable, try a simple painkiller such as Paracetamol. **Do not take Aspirin** as a painkiller, as this may cause bleeding.

## What should I do once I get home?

You must go home and take complete rest for the remainder of the day. Try not to bend down or stoop for a couple of days, as this can increase the risk of bleeding. Do not drive for at least 36 hours.

Do not lift heavy objects or carry out heavy/strenuous exercise for approximately 1 week and remain off work for 2 to 3 days.

## Possible complications

### Bleeding

Because we make a hole in the artery, there is a small risk of bleeding after the operation. This may require a surgical operation and/or a blood transfusion but such measures are only required in less than 1% of cases.

## Allergic reaction

The dye we use is used for many X-ray tests and is iodine based. Very rarely, some people have an allergic reaction to the dye during procedure but we have facilities to deal with this should it occur.

## Circulation problems

Sometimes the operation is not successful and the artery remains the same afterwards as before. Very occasionally the narrowing or blockage to the artery can be made worse by the operation and you may need surgery to correct the problem, sometimes urgently. However, this surgery is usually the same that would be needed if the angioplasty were not carried out at all. This occurs in about 3% of patients.

## Further information

If you have any concerns or questions about your angioplasty, please telephone X-Ray Department on **01271 311869** between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

### PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or e-mail [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple. Alternatively, it may be possible for us to arrange an appointment in your area.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of the staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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