

MYELOGRAM
Lumbar, Thoracic and/or Cervical

Your doctor has scheduled an x-ray examination called a myelogram. This is an examination of the spine and will be performed in the imaging department. During this examination the radiologist will inject a contrast agent (dye) into your spinal canal. The contrast agent shows up as white on the x-ray image which allows us to see your spinal canal. Once the contrast has been injected, you will then be taken to CT for additional imaging of your spinal canal.

PREPARATION: To prepare for your exam, try to drink two glasses of water the night before the exam and one glass of water the morning of your exam. You will need a driver to take you home after your exam. The procedure will take approximately 1 hour to perform. You will be at the hospital for approximately 4 to 6 hours total. You will need to stop taking specific medications for 48 hours prior to and 48 hours after the exam. The list of medications is on the following page (Myelogram Medications).

BEFORE THE TEST: You will be asked to remove most of your clothing and given a hospital gown to wear during the exam. A nurse will go over a list of your medications, check to see if you have been on any anticoagulants (if you have, they will then draw labs to check your PT, PTT, INR), and check your vital signs. The nurse or ordering physician will review your medical history briefly before the exam begins. An x-ray technologist will then ask a few questions prior to your test:

- What kind of symptoms are you having?
- Are you allergic to any medications, including iodine?
- Is there any chance you could be pregnant?
- Have you had any spinal surgeries?

The technologist will explain the procedure in detail. There are some risk factors involved:

- You may get a headache (if you lay flat this increases your possibility of this), please tell the x-ray tech or your nurse if this occurs.
- There is a small chance of infection, but everything we use is sterile, so the chance is very low.
- There might be some bleeding.

If you have any questions about the test, please feel free to ask the technologist at any time. You will be asked to sign a consent form to have the actual test performed. You will be transported to the imaging department in a hospital bed.

FOR THE TEST: When arriving in the imaging department, you will be asked to lay on your stomach on the x-ray table with a pillow under your abdomen and a pillow for your head. Your back will be cleaned off with sterile soap and the radiologist will numb the skin of your back, then numb down a little deeper into your back. They will place a needle into the spinal canal while watching under fluoroscopy. If you feel twinges down your legs let us know etc... Once they get into the canal, a small amount of spinal fluid will be removed and possibly sent to the lab. Once the fluid is removed, the contrast will be put in. You might feel some pressure in your back. Once the contrast is all in, they will remove the needle and have



you roll different ways and take several pictures. Once we are done with our pictures you will go over to CT for additional imaging. You will go to CT on a cart with your head elevated 20 degrees (you are not to lie flat or sit straight up).

AFTER THE TEST: You will need to stay at the hospital for approximately 4 hours after the exam to make sure you are feeling okay. During this time the nursing staff will continue taking your vital signs and possibly give you pain meds if the radiologist feels it is necessary. You may be able to eat and drink at the radiologists' discretion. After the waiting period is over and you have shown that you are doing well, someone will need to drive you home.

RESULTS: The radiologist will study your x-rays in great detail after you have left the hospital, and will dictate a report which will be transcribed and sent to your doctor within one to two working days unless other arrangements have been made.

Every effort will be made to make you as comfortable as possible during your examination. If you have any questions or concerns, please direct them to the imaging staff at 364-2604.