

People caring for people



# Angioplasty



ORWELL CARDIOTHORACIC  
PRIVATE PATIENT UNIT

# Cardiac Angiogram/ Angioplasty

You have been referred to The Orwell Cardiothoracic Private Patient Unit for a procedure called a cardiac angiogram. You may also need an angioplasty. This leaflet describes both procedures, so that you know what to expect. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

## What is a cardiac angiogram?

A cardiac angiogram is a type of x-ray using a special dye, which shows if an artery is narrowed or blocked. The artery can be viewed or recorded on film / video.

## What is an angioplasty?

If, during your cardiac angiogram, an artery is found to be narrowed or blocked, an angioplasty may be carried out, to relieve the narrowing or blockage. Both procedures are performed under local anaesthetic and mild sedation. You will need to stay in hospital overnight.

## What happens before the procedure?

- You will need to arrange for somebody to bring you to the hospital and collect you by car, or taxi. You will not be able to drive yourself. You will not be able to travel by public transport.
- If you need ambulance transport because of your medical condition, this can be arranged for you. Please contact the Orwell administrator on **01268 394 206**

## Please remember to bring with you:

- All your medication, in its original container
- Something to read or a personal stereo
- Overnight bag with pyjamas, dressing gown, slippers and toiletries
- For security reasons, please do not bring jewellery, large amounts of money, mobile phones or anything of great value to you. The hospital regrets that it cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to property belonging to patients.
- Please do not wear jewellery, makeup or nail varnish. Your wedding ring may be left on if you wish and we will cover it with tape.
- Please do not eat for six hours, or drink for four hours before your procedure. The procedure cannot be performed if you have fasted for less than these hours.

## Should I take my normal medication?

Unless advised otherwise, you should take all your usual medication with a small sip of water, apart from Warfarin, Metformin or diabetic medication – please see the following information:

### If you are taking Warfarin

Please stop taking Warfarin four evenings before your procedure. Your doctor may prescribe a Warfarin injection if needed. You will need to have a further blood test on the day before your operation to check your blood is at the right level.

**Do not take any further Warfarin tablets until you are advised to do so following your procedure.**

### If you are taking Metformin

If you are taking Metformin tablets **do not take your tablets on the day of your procedure.**

## If you are diabetic on insulin

Please take ..... units of insulin on the day of your procedure.

## What happens during an angiogram?

- You will be shown to your bed.
- You will be fitted with a wristband with your details on. This is so that staff can identify you correctly and give you the right care. It is important that you do not remove it until you go home.
- The procedure will be explained to you, including any possible complications. Please let us know if you have had any allergic reactions in the past, or if you are or think you might be, pregnant. If you have any questions, please ask. You will be asked to sign a consent form.
- You will be asked to remove your clothing, and will be given a gown to wear.
- A nurse will check your blood pressure, pulse, temperature and oxygen levels.
- A small sample of blood may be taken to make sure it is not too thin.
- A small tube (cannula) will be inserted into a vein in your arm, so that you can be given sedation and other drugs intravenously.

## Cardiac Angiogram / Angioplasty

- You will be asked to remove any dentures just before the procedure. Please tell us if you have any capped or loose teeth.
- You will be taken to the cardiac catheter lab for your procedure.
- You will be given a local anaesthetic in either your groin or forearm, depending on where your doctor would like to insert the dye. You may be given a mild sedative.
- You will be awake throughout the procedure.
- A thin flexible tube called a catheter is passed into the artery. The catheter will be moved, under x-ray

guidance, until it reaches the correct position in your heart. Dye is then injected into the catheter.

This can be seen on the screen.

- X-rays are taken as the dye passes through your arteries, outlining the blood supply to your heart.
- Some people experience a hot flushing sensation from the dye, which will last for a few seconds only. You will be told when this will happen.

## What happens during an angioplasty?

- A fine tube (catheter) is passed through the narrowing or blockage in the artery.
- A special balloon on the end is inflated to open up the artery and allow more blood to flow through it.
- Most patients will also have a stent implanted. This is a small tube of stainless steel mesh. As the balloon is inflated the stent expands so that it holds open the narrowed artery.
- The balloon is then let down leaving the stent in position.

## What happens after the procedure?

- You may be asked to lay flat for a while after your procedure. Your nurse will tell you how long this is likely to be.
- It may be necessary for the nurse to remove the tube in your leg, which the catheter was passed through. This involves pressing in the groin area for a length of time. It is important that you remain as relaxed as possible and follow the instructions that the nurse gives you.
- Your wound will be checked regularly and the nurse will record your blood pressure, pulse and check the pulse in your feet.
- You will be encouraged to observe your wound site and tell the nurse of any bleeding, swelling, pins and needles or pain. If you need to cough or sneeze, you should apply pressure to the wound to prevent bleeding.
- You may take small sips of fluids. You should avoid eating while you are lying flat. Once you are allowed to

sit up you will be able to eat and drink as normal.

- You may need to stay in hospital overnight. If there are no complications you will be allowed to go home the next morning once you have been seen by your consultant. Please do not leave until you have seen the nurse.
- You will be told about any changes to your medication and how to care for your wound before going home.
- If you had an angioplasty, then you will be seen by a CTC Cardiac Rehabilitation Nurse before you go home. They will discuss your condition and your recovery with you. This is known as phase I rehabilitation.

They will pass your details onto the Cardiac Rehabilitation Centre where you live. You will be given a cardiac rehabilitation information leaflet which will include details about where to contact if you need further support.

## What happens when I leave hospital?

- You will need to be collected by car. Sit in the front passenger seat in a reclining position or in the back with your leg straight (if your wound is in your leg)
- Lie on a couch or bed when you get home to keep your leg as straight as possible
- You should drink plenty for the first 24 hours.  
Taking care of your wound
- You can remove the clear dressing after 24 hours.
- Do not bath for 48 hours after the procedure, although you may have showers. Ensure the wound is dry before getting dressed
- If your wound is on the wrist, do not lift or use your wrist for 48 hours after the procedure. Please keep it clean and dry for 48 hours
- You should expect bruising around the wound for up to two weeks afterwards

## Returning to normal activity

- Avoid any strenuous activity for 48 hours.
- Keep your leg as straight as possible when going up or down stairs and sit down or ask someone to assist you when putting on shoes and socks.  
Do not bend down or do any heavy lifting for at least 48 hours
- You may return to normal activity levels after two weeks

## Returning to work

- You can return to work 48 hours after your angiogram, or two weeks after your angioplasty procedure.  
Your consultant or a senior nurse will advise you

## Driving

- Do not use public transport for 48 hours
- Do not drive for 48 hours after an angiogram or for the first week after your angioplasty procedure

## Are there any side effects or possible complications?

If the wound becomes red and itchy or you develop a temperature, consult your GP as soon as possible.

The dye used in your procedure contains Iodine. There is a small chance that you may develop a delayed skin reaction to the dye up to one week after your procedure. If this occurs please consult your GP.

If there is any bleeding from the wound, lie flat and press directly over the site. Please attend your local

**Accident and Emergency department or if you are concerned dial 999.**

**DO NOT DRIVE YOURSELF.**

# Who should I contact if I have any questions?

If you need to contact us for advice regarding your procedure, please telephone The Orwell Cardiothoracic Private Patient Unit on:

**01268 394 218**

## Where can I find further information?

### **British Cardiac Patient Association**

2 Station Road, Swavesey, Cambridge CB4 5QJ

Email: [enquiries@bcpa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bcpa.co.uk)

**0800 4792 800** (free of charge) or

**01954 202 022** (telephone and fax)

[www.bcpa.co.uk](http://www.bcpa.co.uk)

### **British Heart Foundation**

14 Fitzhardinge Street, London, W1H 6SH

**0207 935 0185**

**Heart Information Line: 0845 070 8070**

[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

### **Essex Cardiac Network**

(details of local support groups in your area)

**01206 288 231**

[www.essexcardiacservices.nhs.uk](http://www.essexcardiacservices.nhs.uk)



## **Orwell Cardiothoracic Private Patient Unit The Essex Cardiothoracic Centre**

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