

Arthrogram – A Patients Guide

What is an Arthrogram?

Arthrography is the X-ray examination of a joint that uses a special form of X-ray called fluoroscopy and a contrast material containing iodine. When iodine is injected into the soft tissue surrounding a joint, it appears bright white on an arthrogram, allowing the Radiologist to assess the anatomy and function of the joint.

This will be followed by further pictures in the MRI or CT Scan Department depending on the area being examined. **Please complete the attached safety Questionnaire as soon as possible.**

Before your scan

There is no preparation for this examination. After the test your joint may feel strange, and you will be advised to do nothing strenuous with the limb for the remainder of the day. **You should not drive yourself home following this procedure, or operate heavy machinery.**

What happens when I arrive?

You may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and wear a gown during the exam. You may also be asked to remove jewellery, eye glasses and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the X-ray images.

What does it involve?

The Radiologist will explain exactly what is going to happen. A Radiographer and Nurse will also be present. You will be positioned on the examination table and X-rays are taken of the joint. The skin around the joint is then cleansed and a local anaesthetic is injected into the area. A needle is then inserted into the joint space and contrast material is injected. Your joint may be manipulated and more x-rays are taken.

You will then be transferred to either the CT or MRI Scanner for more imaging.

The procedure may feel uncomfortable. When the contrast media is injected you may feel it as pressure inside the joint.

How long will it take?

The examination will take between 45 minutes and 1 1/2 hours.

After the examination

After the examination, you may experience swelling and discomfort or hear a crackling noise from the joint. You may apply ice to the joint to reduce swelling if it is bothersome. A mild over-the-counter analgesic can be taken for pain. These symptoms usually disappear after 48 hours. Contact your doctor if they persist after two days.

Vigorous exercise is not recommended for 12 hours after the exam.

Are there any side/after effects?

Sometimes people can have an allergic reaction to the X-ray dyes. This can be treated in the hospital.

You may eat and drink normally as soon as the test is finished.

Further information

If you have any concerns or questions about your Arthrogram test please telephone the 1st Floor X-ray Reception Desk.

When will you get the results?

The scan will be examined after your visit and a written report on the findings sent to your referring doctor.