

Fistulogram/Fistuloplasty - A Patients Guide

What is a Fistulogram / Fistuloplasty?

A fistulogram is an invasive procedure that looks at the blood vessels around your fistula. A fistuloplasty is a way of treating any blockages to the blood vessels by using a special balloon. Your doctor will have explained why you need to have this done.

How do I prepare for my examination?

You may be admitted to a ward prior to the procedure.

What happens when I arrive?

On the ward you will be prepared for the examination and asked to put on a gown. Once ready you will be brought to the x-ray department on a bed. On arrival in the X-ray department you will be greeted by staff and taken into the X-Ray room. If you are a woman of childbearing age, you will be asked if you are pregnant.

What does it involve?

The Radiologist will talk to you about exactly what is going to happen. A Radiographer and nurse will also be present.

You will be positioned on the x-ray couch on your back. The area around your fistula will be cleaned and a sterile drape placed over you. A small injection of local anaesthetic is then given and a needle will be placed into your fistula. A wire and catheter are then fed into the blood vessels and a special x-ray dye is injected. A series of x-ray images are then taken.

If required a catheter with a small balloon on will be used to treat any problems found in the blood vessels. Sometimes the large veins in your neck, chest or body may need to be treated as well.

How long will it take?

The Procedure usually 35-40 minutes.

After the examination?

You will be returned to the ward and have bed rest for 4 hours afterwards.

Are there any side effects or after effects?

There is a small risk of bleeding or introducing an infection. The narrowings in the fistula which are treated can come back.