

Myelogram - A Patients Guide

What is a Myelogram?

A Myelogram is an X-ray procedure to look at the spinal canal including the spinal cord, nerve roots and other tissues. A special dye visible on X-rays is injected into the spinal column. X-rays are then taken and a CT scan is performed.

How do I prepare for my examination?

Please be aware that you will need to stay in the Hospital for 4-5 hrs after the Myelogram. We suggest you arrange for someone to be available to collect you mid-afternoon.

No preparation is required for this examination, but please note that you should not drive or operate machinery for 24hrs afterwards.

What happens when I arrive?

On arrival in the X-ray department, you will be asked to change into a gown. Your clothes will be placed in a bag and brought with you to the examination room.

When the time comes for your test, you will be taken into the X-ray room. You must tell your radiographer about any medicines you are taking and if you have any allergies. If you are a woman of childbearing age, you will be asked if there is any chance you may be pregnant.

What does it involve?

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

The Radiologist will insert a needle into the spinal canal in the lower back. They will then check the needle position using X-rays and then inject the special dye. The X-ray couch will then be tilted to allow the dye to spread. A few X-rays will be taken and then you will be transferred to the CT scanner to get further imaging. You may experience mild discomfort during the procedure.

How will I get my results?

The Radiologist may be able to tell you what the examination has shown. More often the Radiologist will want to carefully analyse the images later and provide a detailed report to the referring consultant or GP.

How long will it take?

The whole procedure should take around 30 minutes.

After the examination

You will be transferred to a ward for 4-5 hours and stay lying flat. After this you will be allowed home. You should avoid physical activity for 24 hours and drink plenty of fluids.

Are there any side effects or after effects?

You may also experience a headache and slight bruising at the puncture site.