

About Your Arthrogram

What You Need to Know and Do

An arthrogram is an imaging study. It assesses the problem in your joint.

Depending on what your doctor ordered, either a special dye (contrast) or a steroid for pain relief is injected into your joint. Next images are made using X-ray, computed tomography (CT), or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

What should I do before my arthrogram?

Wear loose-fitting clothing.

Let us know if you:

- are or may be pregnant
- have any allergies
- have any bleeding problems or take blood thinners or other medicines.

Aspirin and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen and naproxen are fine to take before your test.

Antiplatelet and anticoagulation medicines should be stopped for a period of time before the arthrogram, as shown below.

14 days before the arthrogram, stop taking:

- ticlopidine (Ticlid)

7 days before, stop taking:

- clopidogrel (Plavix)
- prasugrel (Effient)

5 days before, stop taking:

- ticagrelor (Brilinta)
- warfarin (Coumadin)
- acenocoumarol

4 days before, stop taking:

- fondaparinux (Arixtra)

2 days (full 48 hours) before, stop taking:

- apixiban (Eliquis)

2 or more days before, stop taking:

- dabigatran (Pradaxa)
- rivaroxaban (Xarelto)

The exact number of days before your procedure for these 2 drugs depends on your physical condition and kidney function. Call (615) 322-0878 to ask how many days it should be.

1 day (full 24 hours) before, stop taking:

- heparin
- LMWH (Fragmin, Lovenox, Normiflo, Orgaran)

You can start retaking the above medicines 24 hours after your procedure.

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What happens during the arthrogram?

We will take X-rays of your joint.

The skin around your joint is cleaned and covered with drapes. The area around your joint is usually numbed with a local anesthetic.

The doctor inserts a needle into your joint and a sample of joint fluid may be removed.

Contrast fluid is injected into your joint to improve the images. X-rays are taken again.

The doctor moves your joint and you will be asked to exercise your joint. We will take X-rays after you exercise. We may do a CT or MRI test.

What should I do after my arthrogram?

For 24 hours after your arthrogram:

- drink extra water or other clear fluids
- do not do any strenuous exercise.

You may have swelling or discomfort in your joint after the procedure. You can put ice on your joint or use an over-the-counter pain medicine.

How do I know if I am having problems?

You should call your doctor right away if you have:

- pain or swelling that doesn't improve by 2 days after your procedure
- fever that is 1°F above your normal temperature that lasts 24 to 48 hours.