

DISCOGRAM: PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

You have been referred to undergo a Discogram. This procedure is performed in an out-patient setting at Hackensack University Medical Center or at Vanguard Surgical Center. Please take the time to read these guidelines carefully, so that you are informed about the procedure.

General Information About Discograms

A Discogram is a diagnostic test performed in order to try and establish exactly what the structural abnormality is that is generating your symptoms. A Discogram involves the injection of a contrast medium (dye) into the nucleus (middle) of the disc. *This test may be done at one or more spinal levels.* X-rays and a CT scan will be taken to show the discs after the contrast medium has been injected.

You will be lying on your stomach during this procedure, which usually takes from thirty to ninety minutes to complete. Intravenous sedation will be administered to make you comfortable and your skin will be numbed with a local anesthetic over the sites where the needles will be inserted. ***Injection of fluid into an abnormal disc may produce temporary pain, which will be helpful diagnostically.***

The Discogram will enable Dr. Implicito to gather the following data about your spine:

- The general condition of your discs. A Discogram will show any tears, leaks, or bulges, which may be present.
- The relationship between your pain and your disc. If the pain that you feel from the injection of the contrast media is the same pain that you have been experiencing, Dr. Implicito will know that your disc is a definite contributing factor to your pain.
- The number of discs that may need surgical correction. A Discogram will identify any abnormal discs and help determine the extent of any potential surgery.

Discogram procedures require exposure to x-rays. **If there is ANY CHANCE THAT YOU MAY BE PREGNANT, Inform the technologist and/or the doctor. You SHOULD NOT HAVE the procedure done.**

Discogram procedures also utilize x-ray “dyes”. **IF YOU ARE ALLERGIC TO SHELLFISH AND/OR IODINE, OR ANY OTHER MEDICATIONS, YOU MUST INFORM DR. IMPLICITO PRIOR TO THE PROCEDURE.**

PRE-ADMISSION TESTING:

Prior to undergoing a Discogram procedure, you may need a note of medical clearance from your primary physician, along with certain blood and urine tests. ***Our office will help you co-ordinate these appointments when scheduling your Discogram.***

DIET RESTRICTIONS:

Do not eat or drink anything after 12:00, midnight, the night before your Discogram, except sips of water with prescribed medications. If you are a diabetic, speak to Dr. Implicito about any exceptions to this policy. Diabetic patients should bring appropriate snack foods to eat following the procedure.

ADMISSION TO HACKENSACK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER:

If your Discogram will be performed at Hackensack University Medical Center, it will be done on an out-patient basis. The hospital requires that you report for admission 2 hours prior to your scheduled procedure time. Please go directly to the Admissions Department upon arrival. *We recommend that you plan on your stay at HUMC lasting for at least 4 hours from admission to discharge.*

ADMISSION TO VNGUARD SURGICAL CENTER:

If your Discogram will be performed at Vanguard Surgical Center, the facility requires that you report for admission 1 hour prior to your scheduled procedure time. *We recommend that you plan on your stay at VANGUARD lasting for at least 3 hours from admission to discharge.* A CT scan may be required at an offsite location within 24 hours of your Discogram – please discuss this with our office prior to your procedure.

PLEASE BE SURE TO BRING ANY AND ALL X-RAYS, CAT SCANS, OR MRI SCANS WITH YOU THE YOUR PROCEDURE.

TRANSPORTATION:

You are not permitted to drive until the next calendar day following a Discogram. We recommend that you arrange to have someone drive you home after your procedure, otherwise you may be transported by taxi at your own expense.

MEDICATIONS:

PLEASE READ THE MEDICATION GUIDELINES LIST CONTAINED ON THIS WEBSITE CAREFULLY...

Aspirin, products that contain aspirin, and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, act as blood thinners and may cause bleeding problems after a Discogram procedure.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU STOP TAKING CERTAIN MEDICATIONS PRIOR TO YOUR PROCEDURE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND DIRECTION OF YOUR PRIMARY PHYSICIAN OR SPECIALIST.

PLEASE REFER TO THE MEDICATIONS GUIDELINES DOCUMENT CONTAINED ON THIS WEBSITE...*If you are taking any of the listed medications, please check with your prescribing physician prior to discontinuing them.*

In general, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications should be discontinued 4 days before the procedure, while aspirin-containing medications should be discontinued 7 days before your procedure. **Do not discontinue all of your medications.** Ask your physician if you are not sure about stopping prescribed medications.

IF YOU ARE TAKING ANY BLOOD-THINNING PRODUCTS (PLAVIX, COUMADIN, ETC.), YOU MUST CALL YOUR PHYSICIAN BEFORE STOPPING THE MEDICATION.

POST INJECTION PRECAUTIONS:

Take it easy for the next 12 hours. Do not resume vigorous exercise for at least 48 hours. **You may have increased discomfort before you feel better.** Please call our office if you experience itching, rash, shortness of breath or stomach upset. Some possible side effects include flushing or a feeling of warmth for several days, fluid retention, weight gain, elevated blood pressure, transient decrease in immunity, or elevated blood sugar. **Call 911 if you experience a medical emergency.**

FOLLOW-UP WITH DR. IMPLICITO:

Dr. Implicito will see you in follow-up at our office about 7 to 10 days after your Discogram is performed. *Please be sure to schedule this follow-up appointment when scheduling your Discogram.*

If you have any questions regarding your upcoming procedure, please feel free to contact our office at 201-251-7725.