

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Arthrogram

The aim of this leaflet is to provide patients undergoing an arthrogram with additional information before an appointment.

What is an arthrogram?

This is an examination to diagnose any problem inside a joint, usually a shoulder, hip or wrist.

To do this, a needle is inserted into the joint. An injection of dye, called contrast medium, is used to outline the joint.

The arthrogram is performed by a specially trained doctor called a radiologist. They will explain the procedure to you and answer any questions you may have.

The procedure is in two parts, both performed in one visit. The first part is performed in the main x-ray department. The second part will be performed using CT or MRI scanning.

What do I need to do prior to the procedure?

There is no preparation for this procedure. You may eat and drink as normal.

Please leave any valuables at home.

You are responsible for all personal items you bring into hospital and the Trust cannot accept responsibility for their loss or damage.

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and sign a consent form.

What happens during the procedure?

For the first part of the procedure, you will be made comfortable on the x-ray table. There will be three or more people in the room - the radiologist, a radiographer and one or more nurses or imaging assistants. We are a teaching department so there may be trainee radiographers or radiologists also. Everyone will be introduced to you properly before we start.

Your skin will be cleaned with an antiseptic solution and local anaesthetic will be injected to anaesthetise the area.

A fine needle will be inserted into the joint so the contrast medium can be injected. A plaster is then applied.

The second part of the procedure involves taking images, which is usually by MRI. You should know from your appointment letter which method will be used. Please read all information leaflets.

What are the risks from the procedure?

Generally, an arthrogram is a safe procedure.

You should inform us if you have ever had an allergic reaction to contrast medium. If you have a reaction, there may be a rash at the injection site, your face might swell and you may have difficulty breathing. If this happens you will be treated immediately. If you experience any of these symptoms when you get home, you should call 111 for further advice. Please note it is very rare for this to occur.

There is a small risk of bleeding/bruising or rash at the injection site. This is minor and does not require treatment.

The procedure is performed under sterile conditions, so any risk of infection is minimised (1 in 20,000).

Signs of infection are a high temperature and the joint becoming more painful, swollen, hot or red. Please seek treatment from your GP or call 111 if any of these symptoms occur.

You may experience some discomfort which may last up to 24 hours, or it may come on after a few days. If this does occur you can take a mild analgesia such as paracetamol.

What happens afterwards?

We usually suggest that you do not drive for at least four hours following this procedure. Please arrange for someone to collect you.

There is no need to keep the injection site dry - you may bath or shower as normal.

Contact details

If you require any further information before your appointment date, you may contact the x-ray department on 01623 672202 between 9am and 5pm.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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