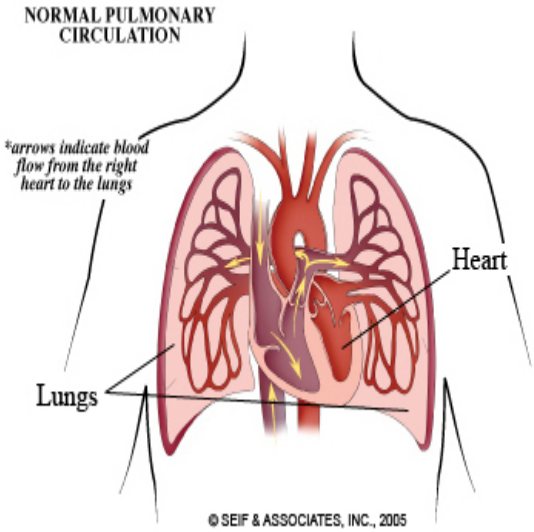
Pulmonary Angiography

Pulmonary angiography is an x-ray procedure used to study the blood vessels (*arteries*) which carry blood from your heart to your lungs. In this test a dye (*contrast media*) is injected into the main pulmonary artery which branches off to the right and left lungs. The dye outlines the shape of the arteries.

This test is used to identify problems such as:

- A blockage or problem in the pulmonary artery.
- Blood clot in the lung (*pulmonary embolus*).
- Finding abnormal, inherited blood vessel connections.
- Detecting bleeding in the lungs.
- Measuring pressure in the pulmonary arteries to guide treatments.



PREPARATION FOR THE PROCEDURE:

- Do not eat or drink from midnight up to the time of the procedure, or as directed.
- You may drink enough water to take your medications the morning of the procedure if you were instructed to do so by your caregiver.
- You should be at the hospital or outpatient facility where the procedure is to be done prior to the procedure as instructed by your caregiver.

PROCEDURE:

- You may be given a medication to help you relax before and during the procedure through an IV in your hand or arm.
- A local anesthetic to make the area numb may be used before inserting the catheter (a long, hollow tube about the size of a piece of cooked spaghetti).
- The area where the catheter will be inserted will be washed with a special soap. This is usually done in the groin but may be done in the fold of your arm by your elbow.
- A specially trained doctor will insert the catheter into a vein with a guide wire. This is guided under a special type of x-ray (*fluoroscopy*) to the right upper chamber of the heart.
- Special dye is then injected and x-rays are taken which give a picture of the blood vessels leaving your heart and going to your lungs.

AFTER THE PROCEDURE:

- After the procedure you will be kept in bed for two or more hours.
- After the catheter comes out, pressure will be kept on the site. A nurse or technician will press on the site with their hand until there is no bleeding. A pressure bandage will then be applied.
- You will be checked often to make sure there is no oozing at the site or other problems. The most common problem is to develop large bruise or clot (*hematoma*) at the site of the catheter insertion.
- Often a chest x-ray will be taken prior to leaving the hospital.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop chest pain, shortness of breath, feel faint, or pass out.
- There is bleeding, swelling, or drainage from the catheter insertion site.
- You develop pain, discoloration, coldness, or severe bruising in the leg or arm where the catheter was placed.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 101° F (38.3° C) develops.

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