

What is a Myelogram

A myelogram is an x-ray study of the spinal canal (using radio opaque contrast), displaying the various nerves which make up the spinal cord. A myelogram can be performed to view the lower back, upper back and neck.

What Happens Before the Procedure

You need to ***fast from solids and liquids for 4 hours*** before the procedure.

If you take **Warfarin, Plavix, Iscover, Clopidogrel** or other blood thinning agents, notify the booking staff as this may require cessation or blood tests prior to the procedure.

You will be admitted to hospital and a nurse will go through a checklist with you. Questions relating to allergies, past medical history and your understanding of the procedure will be discussed.

Notify the nurse and doctor of any:

- Allergies, especially iodine as the contrast medium may cause a reaction.
- If you are or may be pregnant, due to the use of x-ray imaging.

Do not be alarmed if questions are repeated, this is to ensure a thorough check is undergone. A doctor will sign a consent form with you either in the pre admission clinic or on the day of the procedure. Please take this time to ask any questions regarding the procedure or concerns with the doctors. The doctor will discuss with you the details of the procedure and potential complications.

Procedure:

During this study of your spine, you will be positioned on your stomach, and an antiseptic solution will be used to clean the area of your spine being examined. Local anaesthetic will then be injected to the site, whereby you may feel some stinging for a few minutes. The spinal needle is then inserted by the doctor and then guided into position using the x-ray imaging.

Once the needle is in position, the x-ray contrast is injected into the spinal canal. After the injection, the needle is removed and a dressing placed over the injection site. This is followed by a series of x-rays being taken, whereby the table may tilt up and down to move the contrast to the area being studied. After the myelogram you will be required to have a CT scan to further assist in visualising the spinal canal.

What Happens After the Procedure

You will remain in hospital for a further 4 to 6 hours for observation and in this time will be required to lay flat on your back.

You will receive post procedure instructions on the do's and don'ts after a myelogram.

You *are not* able to drive yourself home so, please organise a driver to bring you to and from the procedure.

It is advisable to lay flat overnight, only sitting up to eat or go to the toilet. This will minimise the chance of a post procedure headache.

Drink plenty of fluid over the next 24 hours to ensure that the x-ray contrast is flushed from the kidneys, unless instructed otherwise by your doctor e.g if you are on fluid restrictions.

Risks

Complications are rare during this procedure. However you need to be informed of all the risks.

Risks associated with the procedure include:

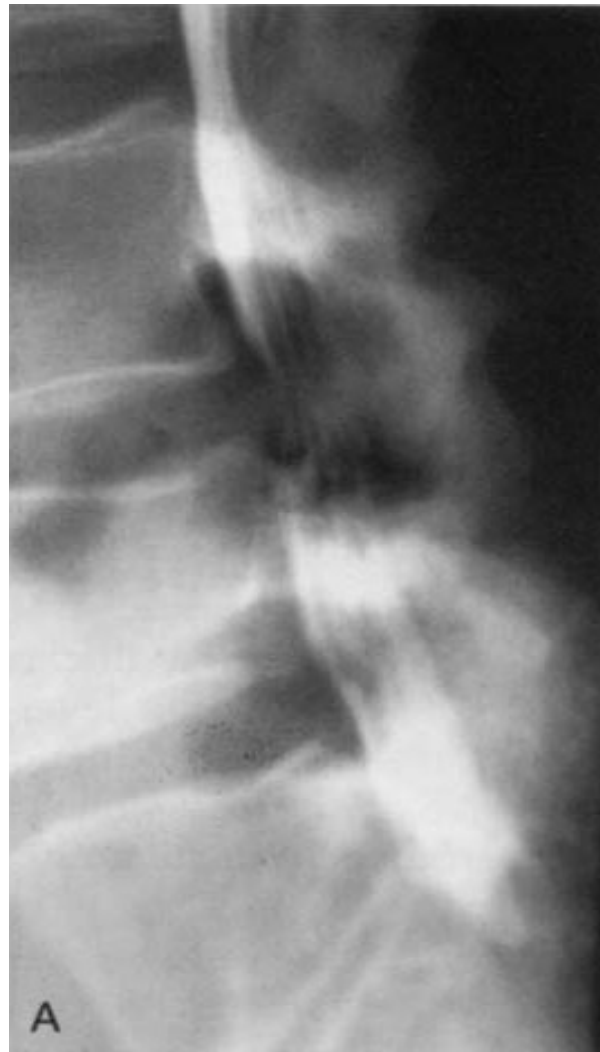
- Pain or discomfort at the needle insertion site, bleeding at the site or into the spinal canal.
- Risks associated with the x-ray contrast medium, including nausea, rash, itchiness and swelling. If you experience any of these symptoms please inform your nurse or doctor. Very severe reaction is rare and a life threatening reaction is extremely rare.
- You may experience headache after your procedure. If headache persists for more than 2 days, please contact your doctor or NIISwa.
- Spinal infection (rare)
- Any procedure potentially can be associated with unpredictable risks including death.

Seek Medical Advice if you have:

- Persistent headache.
- Prolonged nausea and vomiting.
- Weakness or loss of strength in your lower limbs.

Any Concerns contact:

- Your specialist or GP
- NISwa:
Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
(08) 9346 4455
Royal Perth Hospital
(08) 9224 1069
- Or the Emergency Department via switchboard:
Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
(08) 9346 3333
Royal Perth Hospital
(08) 9224 2244



**NEUROLOGICAL INTERVENTION &
IMAGING SERVICES W.A (NISwa)**
PATIENT INFORMATION

MYELOGRAM



**NISWA – Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
1st Floor G Block (access via Gold Lifts)
Phone (08) 9346 4455**

**NISWA – Royal Perth Hospital
3rd Floor Imaging Services North Block
Phone (08) 9224 1069**