

Information on Cardiac Catheterization

- **What is a cardiac catheterization?**

Cardiac catheterization is a specialized procedure in which a 100cm – 150cm long and flexible tube (catheter) is inserted into an artery or vein located in the groin or elbow and guided into the cardiac chambers and major blood vessels to assess the heart's function and structure. The entire procedure takes about 1 hour – 2 hours.

- **Complications**

Complications of cardiac catheterization include: risky arrhythmia, acute pulmonary edema, artery embolism, drug allergy, phlebitis and wound hematoma, etc. The medical and nursing staff will deliver their expertise and timely monitoring to complete the procedure successfully and to avoid the occurrence of complications.

II. The purpose and application of cardiac catheterization

- To assess cardiovascular functioning
- To perform coronary angiography and to detect blockage of the vessels.
- To assess functioning of cardiac valves

Cardiac catheterization is a very important procedure for cardiologist to make accurate diagnosis and treatment. Confirmation of the diagnosis of heart disease will be based on systematic evidence.

III. Before the procedure

- The physician will explain the risks and benefits of the procedure to you and obtain a written consent.
- You will be requested to have a blood test to determine how long it takes the blood to clot.
- The area around your groin will be shaved to avoid wound inflammation.
- An IV-catheter will be inserted in your left hand to administer intravenous drip on the day that the procedure is performed.
- Please practice how to use a bedpan or urinal from on a bed.
- Please fast at least three hours prior to the procedure.
- Please empty your bladder, put on a gown and remove any underwear prior to the procedure.

- Please remove any of the following: dentures, watch, artificial eyes, metal objects, etc. prior to the procedure.

IV. During the procedure

- You will be accompanied by your family to the cardiac catheterization room, and then you will be placed on the procedure table in the cardiac catheterization room.
- The procedure will be performed under sterile environment. You will be connected to an ECG monitor to monitor your vital signs during the procedure.
- A local anesthetic will be administered. If you feel any discomfort, please notify the physician or nurses immediately.

V. After the procedure

- After the procedure, you may resume your usual diet if you do not feel any discomfort.
- A sandbag will be placed on top of the wound for six hours to avoid bleeding. You will be asked not to bend the affected legs or arms. After 24 hours of bedrest, you may get out of bed.
- After the procedure, the medical and nursing staff will monitor your blood pressure, heartbeat and the insertion site regularly. If you experience any discomfort, such as: palpitations, chest tightness, pain, nausea, vomiting, or bleeding at the insertion site, please inform the staff immediately.
- Please notify the medical and nursing staff if you have not urinated over 6 hours.
- The physician will report the test results to you in detail, to see if any other surgery or treatment is required.

VI. Conclusion

Although cardiac catheterization is a common procedure in cardiology departments, most patients still feel frightened. However, our medical and nursing staff will do their best to deliver their expertise to successfully complete the procedure.