

Vascular Angioplasty - Information for patients

This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions you may have about having a vascular angioplasty. It explains the risks and the benefits of the procedure and what you can expect when you come to hospital.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the staff caring for you.

What is an angioplasty?

You may have previously had an angiogram or Computer Tomography Angiography scan (CTA) where the interventional radiologist or vascular surgeon found that you have stenosis (narrowing) in one or more arteries and suggested an angioplasty to treat this problem.

An angioplasty is a minimally invasive procedure, performed under local or general anaesthetic, to open up the narrowed section in your artery. A catheter (fine plastic tube) is inserted through a small puncture, usually in your groin. Under x-ray guidance, the catheter is then passed through the blockage in your artery and a small balloon on the catheter is then inflated, pushing the blockage against the wall of the blood vessel. This procedure improves blood flow, which helps to relieve any symptoms you are experiencing.

The interventional radiologist may also decide that you require a stent to help support the artery open. A stent is a special device made of metal mesh that is placed across a narrowing or blockage to keep the artery open and will stay inside the vessel. It is inserted in the same manner as a balloon as described above.

What are the benefits of angioplasty?

Compared to vascular surgery, balloon angioplasty and stent placement are much less invasive and relatively low-risk. These procedures are performed using local anaesthetic. As general anaesthetic is not required in most patients, there is no extended stay in the hospital.

The procedure is minimally invasive, meaning no surgical incision is necessary—only a small nick in the skin that does not need stitches.

You will be able to return to your normal activities shortly afterwards.

What are the possible risks of having an angioplasty?

An angioplasty cannot be performed without some element of risk. Complications are less common during planned (elective) procedures and the majority of people have no major problems. You will need to stay in hospital for a minimum of four to five hours after the angioplasty to make sure it is safe for you to go home, and to allow the closure device in the puncture site to settle. Sometimes it is necessary to stay overnight. The radiologist will explain the risks to you before the procedure. Below is a list of some possible risks:

- Bleeding or bruising under the skin where the catheter is inserted in the groin (a haematoma). This is common, and may take one to weeks to disappear. Larger haematomas may require further management

- Occasionally the artery can be damaged during the procedure and tear. This can sometimes be treated in the same department by putting a stent (artificial tube) with a covering around it (stent-graft) into the artery to seal the tear. If this is not possible, an operation may be required to repair the artery. Less than 1 in 100 people need this operation
- Blockage of the arteries may occur, however, this is very rare. Some damage can be caused to the artery by the catheter or if material causing a blockage is dislodged and causes a blockage in other arteries (an embolus). This may require an operation or another procedure
- Restenosis is one of the most common complications of angioplasties. This involves the gradual re-narrowing of the blood vessels in the weeks or months following the procedure. There are certain conditions that increase the risk of this complication and these are hypertension (high blood pressure), diabetes, angina and kidney disease

Contrast

Vascular angioplasty uses x-ray dye (contrast), and very rarely, a reaction may occur. If you have ever had a test that uses x-ray dye and you have had a reaction to it, you should tell the team before the procedures begins. A reaction may take the form of a rash or itching and very rarely, a more severe allergic reaction can occur. The team are trained to deal with this and have measures in place to deal with this safely should this occur.

If you have had a previous reaction, please let us know, and we can put measures in place to minimise risk from another reaction.

Radiation – Benefit versus Risk

Vascular angioplasty uses X-ray radiation. The radiation dose that you get from an angioplasty is small and the associated risks are low. Clinical staff consider both the risks and benefits when deciding what examination is appropriate for you and if the benefits of having the angioplasty outweigh any risk. Clinical staff are responsible for making sure that the dose you receive is kept as low as necessary to aid your diagnosis or treatment.

Pregnancy

If you are in the early stages of pregnancy there is a very small risk of x-rays harming your unborn child. If you think you could be pregnant, or you are trying to get pregnant, please tell us before your appointment. Individuals aged 10-55 will be asked to confirm their pregnancy status by the radiographer before the procedure and sign a form.

Are there any alternatives?

Your referrer has decided that angioplasty would be the most useful procedure in your case. The examination will help your referrer to assess you more fully and plan any further treatment that might be necessary. If you would like more information about alternative imaging tests, please speak to the doctor or health care professional managing your care.

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Before your procedure:

Fasting

You cannot eat or drink anything (except water) for 6 hours before your procedure. You may drink water up to 2 hours before your procedure.

Consent

We want you to be involved in all the decisions about your care and treatment. If you choose to go ahead, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This confirms that you agree to have the procedure and understand everything involved. Students/trainees may be present during the examination but only with your verbal consent.

Please remember that you can ask the Interventional Radiologist any questions you have at any time before, during or after your scan.

Pre-assessment

An appointment with one of our vascular pre-assessment nurses is required prior to your angioplasty. They will carry out a pre-assessment health check and explain the procedure and answer any questions you may have, students/trainees may be present during the examination but only with your verbal consent.

Please remember that you can ask the doctor any questions you have at any time before, during or after your scan.

What happens before the procedure?

Please let us know if you have any of the following:

• Severe allergies?
• Have you had a previous adverse reaction to x-ray dye before?
• Asthma, which is poorly controlled?
• Renal impairment (poor kidney function)?
• Diabetes, which is treated with Metformin therapy?
• Are taking any anti-coagulants (blood thinners)?

On the day of your angioplasty, you should have a shower or bath on the morning of your angioplasty. This will make sure your groin area is clean and helps to prevent infection. If you have been told that you will be having an angioplasty and going home the same day, you will need someone to take you home by car or taxi and stay with you overnight.

You will have a cannula in your arm so that antibiotics, pain relief and possibly sedation to make you feel relaxed and sleepy can be given. You will be asked to change into a hospital gown and a small cannula (thin tube) will be inserted in your arm. You will be brought to the Interventional suite in your bed, where you will be met by a team of nurses, a Radiographer and Interventional radiologist. The procedure will be explained to you by the Radiologist and you will be asked to sign a consent form. The Royal Victoria Hospital is a teaching hospital and as such university students may be in attendance, with your permission.

What happens during the angioplasty?

You will be helped to transfer onto the X-ray table and monitors attached to record heart rate and blood pressure. You will be awake for the procedure but you may have medicines given through the cannula in your arm to help you relax and ease your pain if required.

The skin will be cleaned with antiseptic, sterile drapes will be over you, and the insertion site in your groin is numbed with local anaesthetic (this will sting for a short while). The Interventional Radiologist will take a series of pictures of your leg arteries and treat them appropriately.

What happens after your angioplasty?

You will stay in the recovery ward for a short time (around 2 hours) after your procedure to make sure there are no problems. The nurse will let you know when you can eat, drink and mobilise. If all your checks are normal and you feel well, you will be able to go home. Once the examination is complete, you can go home. The Interventional Radiologist will formally report on the procedure and the report will be sent to your referring doctor or other professional who referred you for the scan.

Aftercare following discharge

An adult must stay with you during the 24 hour period following discharge in the unlikely event of complications. Please have this arranged in advance.

You cannot drive yourself home or use public transport, again, please arrange this advance of your appointment. If you do not have anyone to drive you home, the Trust can help. Do not drive for 24 hours after the procedure and not until you feel safe to do so.

Please rest at home for 24 hours.

Do not exercise, lift heavy items or consume any alcohol during this period.

What to do when you get home

At home you may eat and drink as normal and continue with your normal medication unless instructed otherwise by the doctors. Keep a check on the puncture site and do not drive or do strenuous exercise for 48 hours after the procedure to allow it to heal properly.

Bleeding or swelling is rare. Should this occur, lie down and apply pressure directly to the site for 10 minutes. If it persists after 10 minutes you should go to your nearest A&E department.

You will have a follow up outpatient appointment but if you have any concerns before then contact your GP.

When will I get the results?

You may be able to discuss your procedure with the performing Interventional Radiologist once it is complete. The performing Interventional Radiologist will formally report on your procedure, and it will be attached to the images on our Radiology Information System (RIS). A copy of the report will be sent by Radiology to the referring clinician. The referring clinician will arrange any follow up.

Duration and Location

Admission is either to the Day of Surgery Unit (DSU) or ward, as stated on your appointment letter. You will be looked after here by a team of nurses pre and post procedure.

The procedure itself, performed in the Interventional Radiology Suite, should take approximately 2 hours but may take longer depending on the amount of disease in your arteries.

Whilst we try to accommodate all patients at their appointed time, occasionally emergency patients arise which may delay procedure or result in an extend length of time in DSU prior to the procedure. Your procedure may be cancelled due to emergencies cases and you will be offered another appointment as soon as possible.

Image sharing

Your images will be electronically stored on the hospital picture archiving system. This data can be accessed throughout the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and other doctors and health care professionals who are directly involved in your care. The ability to share images and radiological reports will improve the safety and quality of your care by ensuring that the right information is available in the right place at the right time.

In order to improve the medical services we provide we may also use your data as anonymously as possible for internal audit and medical education. If you would prefer that your data is not used for these purposes, please inform a member of staff when you attend for your examination.

If your data is to be used for research, then a separate consent process will be used. You will be asked for your consent, should this be the case.

Contact us

If you have any queries, we will be happy to answer any questions before or after your procedure and you can contact us on the number given on your appointment letter.

For procedures performed at the Royal Victoria Hospital, please email InterventionRadRVH@belfasttrust.hscni.net Tel: 02896156661 Interventional Radiology Secretary RVH

For procedures at the Belfast City Hospital, please email InterventionRadBCH@belfasttrust.hscni.net Tel: 02895041165 Interventional Radiology Secretary BCH

Feedback

We hope you found the information in this leaflet helpful. If it did not tell you what you needed to know or you would like to provide any feedback on your experience please let us know so that we can make any necessary improvements.

You can provide feedback on your experience:

Telephone: (028) 9504 8000 (Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm)

Textphone: 18001 028 950 48000

By email: compliments@belfasttrust.hscni.net

By email: complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net

By completing an online form: <http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/contact/FeedbackForm.htm>

Care Opinion



We invite you to share your experience by clicking the following link:
<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/>

or by scanning the following QR code on your smartphone or tablet:



Language and accessible support services

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

If a Sign Language interpreter is required, please either telephone **028 9615 8900** via the Sign Video remote interpreting service (<https://signvideo.co.uk/deaf-community/>) or email us at MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net and we will arrange one for your appointment. Please have your H&C number ready when calling or include it in your email. This can be found at the top right corner of any Health and Social Care letters you may have received.

If you are unable to hear on the phone and need to contact us with regards to your appointment you can email us at MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net.

Do you need this information in another format or language?

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, including Braille, large print, CD, audio tape please contact the telephone number **028 9615 8900** or e-mail address MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net, and we will do our best to meet your needs.

Polish - Czy potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym formacie lub języku?

Fundusz ma dostęp do usług w zakresie tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych. Jeśli potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym języku lub formacie, w tym w piśmie Braille'a, dużym druku, na płycie CD, kasecie magnetofonowej, skontaktuj się z nami pod numerem telefonu lub adresem e-mail **028 9615 8900 / MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net**, a my dołożymy wszelkich starań, aby spełnić Twoje potrzeby.

Arabic - هل تحتاج هذه المعلومات بصيغة أو بلغة أخرى؟

تستطيع الجمعية توفير خدمات الترجمة الفورية والتحريرية. إذا احتجت هذه المعلومات بلغة أو بصيغة أخرى، بما فيها صيغة برايل Braille أو صيغة بالأحرف الكبيرة، أو في سي دي CD أو في شريط مسموع، يُرجى الاتصال برقم التليفون أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**، وسوف نبذل قصارى جهدنا في تلبية احتياجاتك.

Lithuanian - Ar jums reikia šios informacijos kitu formatu ar kalba?

Tarnyba gali suteikti vertimo žodžiu ir raštu paslaugas. Jei reikia šios informacijos kita kalba ar formatu, įskaitant Brailio raštą, didelį šriftą, kompaktinį diską, garso įrašą, skambinkite telefonu arba susisiekite el. paštu MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / **028 9615 8900** ir mes padarysime viską, kad patenkintume jūsų poreikius.

Romanian - Aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-un alt format sau altă limbă?

Trustul are acces la servicii de interpretariat și traducere. Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-o altă limbă sau într-un alt format, inclusiv Braille, tipărire cu caractere de mari dimensiuni, CD, înregistrare audio, atunci vă rugăm să ne contactați la numărul de telefon sau la adresa de e-mail **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**, iar noi vom face tot posibilul pentru satisfacerea necesităților dumneavoastră.

Tetum - Ita presiza atu informasaun ida ne'e iha formatu ka lian seluk ka lae?

Fidusiáriu ida ne'e iha asesu ba servisu durubasa no tradusaun. Se Ita presiza informasaun ida ne'e iha lian ka formatu seluk, inklui letra Braille, letra boot, CD, kasete audio, entaun favór telefone número ka enderesu e-mail **MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900**, no ami sei halo esforsu tomak atu kumpre Ita-nia nesesidade sira.