

# Myelogram

## What is a Myelogram?

A myelogram is an x-ray procedure. X-ray contrast or “dye” is injected into the sac around the spinal cord and nerves. Pictures are taken of the spine with an x-ray machine and a CT scanner.

## Why is it done?

A myelogram may be done to look for problems around the spinal cord that can cause pain, weakness, or numbness.

## How is a Myelogram done?

The skin on your back or neck is cleaned and then numbed with a local pain medicine. The dye is placed into the sac around the spinal nerves using a small needle. This is sometimes called a “spinal tap”. Pictures are taken of the spine using an x-ray machine and a CT scanner.

## What conditions might affect the procedure?

Please tell your doctor if you have any of the following:

- Allergy to x-ray contrast or “x-ray dye”
- Any history of chest pain or kidney failure
- Difficulty lying flat or breathing when lying flat
- If you are on blood thinners
- A seizure disorder or epilepsy
- If you are diabetic

## What should I do before the procedure?

- Remember to arrange for someone to drive you home after the procedure.
- Do not eat or drink anything for 4 hours before your procedure. An empty stomach is best. “X-ray dye” may cause nausea if you have just eaten.

## What will I be allowed to do after the procedure?

- You should not drive for 24 hours after the procedure.
- Take it easy for 1 day (no heavy lifting, exercise, or stair climbing). This helps the small puncture site heal and helps you avoid getting a headache.
- After 24 hours you may go back to regular activity.
- Follow all the instructions you are given.

## Are there any side effects?

Most patients have no side effects. Some patients get a headache after the procedure. If you get a headache take Tylenol as directed, and lie down in bed. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids.

**Call the neuroradiologist or go to the emergency room if you have any numbness, pain, fever or severe headache.**