

## Lumbar Discograms

A discogram is a diagnostic test to help your physician better determine the source of your pain. Your physician may suspect that your pain is caused by a disc problem, but unsure which disc(s) are causing the pain. A discogram can help determine if your pain is indeed caused by a disc problem and if so, can help pinpoint the disc(s) which are involved.

**You will be receiving I.V. Sedation for this procedure. Please follow the instructions for I.V. Sedation/Analgesia.**

If you take a medication for a physical condition such as a heart medication, you may do so with a small sip of water. If you have any questions about medications, please call and ask to speak to a nurse.

Discograms can be a lengthy procedure. Please be prepared to spend approximately *three to four hours* at the facility.

A nurse will review your health history and obtain information about your pain symptoms. An I.V. will be started.

The physician who will be performing the procedure will speak with you and answer any questions that you may have about the procedure.

You will be lying on your abdomen during the procedure. Pillows will be placed to add to your comfort. You will receive supplemental oxygen through a nasal cannula. A nurse will be with you to continually monitor your vital signs, administer sedation and give support.

The physician will clean your skin with an antibacterial solution and numb your skin with a local anesthetic. Using X-ray guidance, the physician will place a needle in each of the disc(s) that are to be studied.

After the physician is satisfied with the needle placement, he will inject a small quantity of contrast dye and antibiotic into the disc(s). You will experience a pressure sensation. If the disc is the cause of your pain, you will experience symptoms similar to your usual symptoms. After the physician has obtained the information that he needs, the needle(s) will be removed, the site cleaned and a dressing applied.

Following the procedure, you will be allowed to recover for approximately one hour. The nurse will continue to monitor your heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen level. Your I.V. will be removed prior to discharge.

When your driver arrives, he/she will receive discharge instructions. The driver must sign that he/she understands the instructions.

After the procedure:

You should plan on resting the day of the procedure. You may resume your usual activities on the following day. You may experience increased pain for a day or two after the procedure. You may continue to take your usual pain medications.

Applying ice to the procedure site on the day of the procedure, 20 minutes on/20 minutes off, may make you more comfortable. After 24 hours, you may use or heat. Do not ever apply ice or heat continuously to your skin.

You should continue your usual diet and take all your medications as prescribed.

Please notify the physician if you experience:

- ◆ Bleeding at the procedure site
- ◆ Dizziness or weakness
- ◆ Signs of infection at the injection site or if you develop a fever