Questions to Ask Your Doctor About Angiograms

The following questions can help you talk to your physician about having an angiogram. Print out or write down these questions and take them with you to your appointment. Taking notes can help you remember your physician’s response when you get home.

- What information do you hope to gain from the angiogram?
- What potential benefits may an angiogram have for me?
- What are the alternatives to having an angiogram?
- What risks can I expect from undergoing an angiogram?
- Do I need to have an empty stomach before the procedure? Should I withhold any of my medications? Are there any medications that I will need to take?
- How will you enter my body to perform the angiogram? (Common entry sites are the artery in the groin or the artery in the wrist.)
- How much radiation will I be exposed to during the angiogram?
- What will happen if a blockage is discovered?
- Under what circumstances might an angiogram result in immediate angioplasty and stenting or a referral for bypass surgery?
- Will I have limitations after the procedure? Will I need to have someone who can drive me home?

Intracardiac echocardiography (ICE)

- What can intracardiac echocardiography tell us about my heart?
- What are the possible benefits for me of ICE?
- What are my individual risks associated with having an ICE test?
- What other test or procedure will ICE be performed with?

Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT)

- What symptoms or test results indicated that OCT in conjunction with coronary angiography might be helpful?
- What are the potential benefits for me of OCT?
- What are my individual risks associated with undergoing OCT?
- What happens next if OCT identifies a problem with one of my blood vessels?
- Will I have limitations after the procedure? Will I need to have someone who can drive me home?

Intravascular ultrasound (IVUS)

- Why might IVUS be beneficial for me?
- What individual risks will IVUS present for me?