

Coronary Angiography

Prof Ruparelia will suggest proceeding to an invasive coronary angiogram if there is concern that there is a significant narrowing or blockage due to your symptoms and often supported by findings of other investigations.

How should I prepare?

We often ask for you to need eat (water is fine) for 6 hours before your procedure. If you have an element of kidney failure, you may be asked to attend a little earlier than your planned procedure time so that you can be hydrated prior to the procedure. Please wear comfortable clothing.

The Procedure

Prof Ruparelia will explain every step of the procedure and recovery in detail to ensure that all question and concerns have been addressed.

On the day of your procedure you will be asked to attend. A small cannula is usually inserted in the arm through which any medication can be administered if required.

You are awake through the procedure and some sedation can be administered if you are nervous or anxious.

Local anaesthetic is administered to numb the skin in the wrist (the most common route - rarely Prof Ruparelia may suggest that the procedure is performed via the artery at the top of the leg - femoral artery).

Small tubes are then advanced through the artery through which contrast is administered to take pictures of the coronary arteries with X-ray.

Duration

The procedure usually takes less than 30 minutes.

Coronary angiography is generally very safe with the risk of a significant complication approximately 0.1%. The most common complication includes pain, bleeding, bruising of the puncture site. There is a very small risk of a stroke, heart attack or mortality.

After Your Test

Prof Ruparelia will explain the findings and formulate an ongoing management plan with you immediately after the procedure.

If the procedure has been performed via the wrist (radial artery) you are able to sit up immediately. A tight band is usually applied around the puncture site and is slowly loosened over two hours. Once the team are happy with the puncture site you will be allowed to go home (2-3 hours after the procedure). It is important that you have someone to take you home and be with you for the first night at home. You should take care of the wrist for a few days to facilitate healing.