

# PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

## CARDIAC CATHETERISATION

The test to detect the presence of coronary artery disease is called “Coronary Angiography” (Angiogram). It is most commonly referred to as a cardiac catheterisation. The two terms are used interchangeably. The procedure is performed under local anaesthetic. Your Cardiologist will determine if he needs to involve an Anaesthetist and sedation. The procedure involves inserting a short plastic tube with a one-way valve, called a sheath, into an artery in your groin, wrist, or elbow. Your Doctor will select the most appropriate site for you. However, we commonly use the wrist or right groin. Through the sheath, thin, flexible, hollow tubes called catheters, are threaded over a guidewire and positioned under X-ray in the heart and/or coronary arteries. A liquid contrast (X-ray dye) is injected through the catheter and X-ray video images are taken. The test reveals if any of the coronary arteries are narrowed or blocked by plaque (fatty) deposits. At the same time, the pumping chamber and valves on the left side of the heart are examined for any abnormalities.

## PERCUTANEOUS CORONARY INTERVENTION (PCI)

PCI involves opening a narrowed or blocked segment of a coronary artery by insertion of a small balloon catheter via the femoral artery in the groin (or the radial artery located in the arm). The procedure is performed under local anaesthetic. Your Cardiologist will decide if he needs to involve an Anaesthetist and sedation.

A fine guidewire is introduced through a catheter into the coronary artery. A balloon catheter is then inserted over the wire and positioned across the narrowed/blocked artery. The balloon is then inflated. This procedure opens the narrowed artery by compressing the fatty material (plaque) against the wall of the artery and restores blood flow to the area of the heart that was previously deprived by the narrowed or occluded artery.

It is not uncommon to experience some angina during inflation of the balloon, as the coronary artery is temporarily occluded, and the heart muscle is deprived of oxygen. This only lasts for a very brief period of time and resolves as soon as the balloon is deflated.

At the same time, a stent may be placed in the coronary artery. A stent is a small stainless steel mesh tube that supports the coronary artery and maintains patency.

This procedure will involve an overnight stay in hospital.

CARDIOLOGY ASSOCIATES

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