

CISTERNOGRAM

Patient Education

What is the purpose of this test?

A cisternogram is used to discover why you may have memory problems or problems with walking. The results of this study will help your doctor make treatment recommendations.

How should I prepare for this test?

There is no special preparation necessary, but you can help by drinking plenty of fluid before the test. This will improve the distribution of the tracer in the blood and will result in better quality images and less radiation exposure to your body.

How long does the test take?

The test is done in four consecutive days--the first day, you can expect to be here 4-6 hours. On the three remaining days, you will be here approximately 30 minutes.

How is the test done?

On day one, you will be asked to lie on your stomach on a x-ray table. A radiologist will give you an injection of a radioactive tracer through a spinal needle into your lower back. After the injection you will have to lie flat on your back for four (4) hours. After that time, an initial set of pictures will be taken. After setting appointments for successive returns during the next three days, you may leave. Once you are home, lying on your back as much as possible for the first 24 hours may avoid severe headaches. You may have your regular diet and resume your regular activities after 24 hours. On the following three days, you will return for additional pictures.

What about radiation?

Only a small amount of radiation is used in this procedure. The dose for each patient is carefully selected to give the least possible exposure while still allowing for an accurate exam. The radiologist and technologists are trained in radiation safety. **CAUTION:** This test should not be done during pregnancy or breast-feeding.

After the test...

Your cisternogram will be analyzed by a radiologist who specializes in interpreting this kind of test. He will report the findings to your doctor, who will then discuss the results with you and explain any treatment you may require. Unless your doctor gives you special instructions, you may resume your previous diet, medications, and activities.



CONTACT YOUR PHYSICIAN FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS