

# IV Contrast Dye (Media)

## What is IV Contrast?

**Intravenous (IV) contrast dye** (also known as media) is a colourless liquid that we use to obtain high quality images during imaging tests. We inject the dye directly into a vein (blood vessel). When it travels through your body, it highlights the organs and blood vessels. With the dye, we are able to see more detail in the pictures. We can also give less radiation to the patient.

Not everyone will receive this dye. It will depend on your medical history and the type of information your radiologist (doctor) wants from the test.

## How do I prepare for a procedure that uses IV contrast dye?

### Please let your doctor ordering the test know if:

1. You are currently taking any medicines. Your doctor may instruct you on any changes to taking these medicines, if necessary.
2. You have any allergies. It is important to share if you are allergic to any type of dye containing iodine. If you do have known allergies, we suggest you wear your MedicAlert® bracelet on the day of your visit.
3. You are breast feeding. At this time, it is not clear if the dye has any effect on breast milk.

### On the day of your test:

- Take your medicines as your doctor advised.
- Do not eat or drink anything 2 to 4 hours before the test, or as instructed at the time of booking. If you are receiving IV contrast dye, an empty stomach will help prevent you from feeling sick.

### Please bring the following to the hospital:

- Your health card (OHIP) and photo ID.
- All the medicines you are currently taking, including over-the-counter medicines, herbals and supplements, in their original containers.

**Do not** bring jewelry or other valuables.

## What can I expect during the procedure?

We will place a needle in your vein in your arm or hand to start an intravenous (IV). We use this site to inject the dye.

You will feel a coolness in the arm as the dye travels along the vein.

As the dye mixes with your blood, you may:

- Feel a sudden warmth throughout your body and a sudden urge to urinate (pee). This feeling only lasts a few minutes and there is very little to no danger.
- Have an unpleasant taste in your mouth. This sensation is also short lasting.

Reactions to IV contrast are rare, but they can happen. If you do have a reaction, it will usually happen right after we inject the dye. The reaction you have can vary, from mild or moderate to severe.

The following table shows the possible reactions that you can experience from the dye and how we treat the reaction.

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|                           |  |  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Mild Reactions</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sneezing and coughing</li> <li>• Itching, hives, or a rash</li> <li>• Swelling in the eyes or face</li> <li>• Nausea and vomiting.</li> </ul>   | If you have a mild reaction, we will watch you carefully. Usually, you will not need any treatment or medicines.                                     |
| <b>Moderate Reactions</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase or decrease in blood pressure</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Wheezing</li> <li>• Swelling in the throat</li> <li>• Fast or slow heart rate (tachycardia or bradycardia).</li> </ul> | If you have a moderate reaction, we will treat you and watch you closely.  |
| <b>Severe Reactions</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convulsions (seizures)</li> <li>• Extremely low blood pressure</li> <li>• Severe swelling in the throat</li> <li>• Unresponsiveness</li> <li>• Cardiopulmonary arrest (your heart stops).</li> </ul>    | If you have a severe reaction, we will treat you right away. You may also need to stay in the hospital so that we can continue to watch you closely. |

## What can I expect after the procedure?

- We will remove your IV and put pressure on the site for a few minutes. This will help prevent bleeding.
- You are free to go home after you have finished the scan or test.

## How do I care for myself at home?

- **If you are not on a restricted fluid diet**, drink plenty of fluids (about 8 to 10 ounces) for the first 24 hours. This helps to get rid of the dye from your body faster. The dye comes out of your body through the kidneys and then the urine. The dye is clear so you will not see any difference in your urine.
- Most reactions occur during the test, right after we inject the dye. However, you may still have a

reaction to the dye after a few hours and up to 24 hours after your test. Please do not ignore any signs of a reaction.

**Contact your doctor or go to the nearest emergency department if you:**

- Have any of the mild or moderate reactions listed above. It is important for a medical professional to check any reactions you experience.
- Feel any sensation that is different to how you felt before we injected the dye.

**If you have any of the severe reactions listed or you have trouble breathing, call 9-1-1 immediately.**