Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Having a myelogram

This leaflet explains what happens during a myelogram examination in the Radiology (X-ray) Department at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. The examination is conducted by a radiologist (specialist X-ray doctor) and a radiographer (X-ray professional).

Before the myelogram

You should have only a light breakfast on the morning of your appointment.

Please bring your appointment letter with you.

A health care assistant or nurse will greet you in the waiting area and may accompany you during the exam.

Please attend alone, unless you need clinical or social support. Please be aware that no childcare facilities are available.

You may be admitted to the X-ray recovery bay following this examination.

You will not be able to drive yourself home after the appointment so please arrange other transport.

What is a myelogram?

A myelogram is a test to look at the cord in your spine that contains all the nerves. As you are unable to have a magnetic resonance image (MRI) of your spine (usually due to a pacemaker), this test is done with computerised tomography (CT) and fluoroscopy.

Are there any risks with this test?

You will be asked whether you suffer from any allergies prior to the test.

What happens during the myelogram?

We will ask you to change into a hospital gown. You will then have a small injection of local anaesthetic in your lower back. A small needle is then placed into the covering of your spinal cord and contrast liquid that shows on X-rays is injected while X-ray pictures are taken. Occasionally, we may ask you to wait in the recovery bay to allow the injected contrast to move around your spinal cord. You will then have the CT part of the examination. During the examination, the scanner acquires a series of images. The CT scanner consists of an X-ray tube that rotates around your body. You will usually be moved continuously through this rotating beam. The X-rays will be analysed by a detector on the opposite side of your body.

After the myelogram

You can usually go home afterwards once the radiologist has seen the scans.

You must not drive yourself home from your appointment.

Results

We will send a report of your examination to your referring doctor; if this is a hospital specialist, then the specialist will contact your GP with the report.

Contacting us

Radiology Department Tel 0118 322 7991

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RAD_0049
RBFT Radiology Department, November 2026
Next review Date: November 2028