

Having a urethrogram

What is a urethrogram?

This is a special X-ray examination to view the tube (the urethra) that connects the bladder to tip of the penis. A special fluid (x-ray dye) is injected into the tip of the penis which can show abnormalities of the urethra, such as a blockage or narrowing (stricture), on the X-ray pictures.

The examination is conducted by a radiologist (a specialist X-ray doctor) or by a senior radiographer (an X-ray professional) who has been specially trained to carry out this test.

What happens during the urethrogram?

When you arrive at the X-ray Department we will ask you to change into a hospital gown. You will lie on a couch in the X-ray room. An anaesthetic (numbing) jelly is used to place a small plastic catheter (tube) into the tip of the penis. A very small balloon on the catheter tip is inflated so that the catheter stays in place. A special fluid is then injected through the tube and a series of X-ray pictures are taken. When the X-ray pictures are complete the test is finished. The examination should take 20-30 minutes in total. If you already have a catheter into your bladder because you have already had surgery, then the small catheter used is placed alongside the existing one. The fluid then passes around the existing tube and is used to show any leaks prior to the bladder catheter being removed. Some patients experience some mild discomfort during the test, although most patients do not experience any discomfort at all.

On the day of your test

- Please bring your appointment letter with you.
- You can eat and drink normally on the day of your test.
- Please do not bring children with you. They will not be able to come into the room with you when you have the test and there are no childcare facilities.

After the urethrogram

You may experience a slight fullness within the penis – this is normal and usually passes quickly, particularly once you have emptied your bladder. You will then be shown into a bathroom to clean up (the X-ray dye can be sticky). In there, you can get dressed and leave the department. You may have a clinic appointment for the same day, so you can attend once the examination has finished.

Are there any risks with this test?

This test involves X-rays. Every effort is made to keep radiation to a minimum.

The special fluid contains iodine. If you are allergic to iodine we may not be able to carry out the test but we would discuss this with you depending on the severity of your allergy.

Results

The radiologist or senior radiographer will prepare a report of your examination. The report will be sent to the doctor who arranged for the test to be done and they will give you the result.

Further information

If you have further questions you can contact us on 0118 322 7991.

More information is available on the Trust website: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

RAD_0101

Radiology Department, January 2020

Review due: January 2022