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The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

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Date written: July 2013  
Last revised: August 2020  
Review date: August 2020  
Version: 1.3  
Code: PI1116

## **Cystogram** (page 1 of 2)

### **What is a cystogram?**

A cystogram is a procedure that uses X-rays to examine the bladder. The examination shows the appearance of the bladder and how it fills. The procedure is done by a radiologist (a doctor who uses X-rays to diagnose and treat illnesses).

Still X-ray pictures or fluoroscopy (a study of moving body structures—similar to an X-ray ‘film’) may be used. An X-ray dye, called contrast, is used. The contrast dye shows up on the images and allows the radiologist to see the bladder clearly. The radiologist will then review and report on the images.

### **How long does it take?**

It takes about 15-45 minutes.

### **What happens during the cystogram?**

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown. You will then be taken to the fluoroscopy room and asked to lie on the X-ray table. Your genital area will be cleaned and draped with sterile towels. Some local anaesthetic jelly will be used to make the examination more comfortable. A thin hollow tube called a catheter will be inserted into your urethra (the opening through which you urinate). This might be a little uncomfortable but should not be painful. The catheter will be advanced gently into your bladder.

If you are having a cystogram after an operation you may already have a catheter in place. We will use this catheter for the examination. The catheter will not be removed unless your doctor has asked us to do so. If you have any questions about this please ask your doctor or the radiologist on the day.

The contrast dye will then be put into your bladder via the catheter. As the contrast flows into your bladder, X-ray images will be taken. You may be repositioned to image the area from several angles. The radiologist and radiographer will be with you at all times to help you.

Once these X-ray images have been taken the catheter will be removed. If the referring doctor is interested in the bladder outlet or urethra then an additional X-ray image can be taken of your bladder and you may be asked to empty your bladder while being X-rayed.

## **Clinical Radiology**

 **01722 336262 ext 4196**

## **What are the benefits – why should I have a cystogram?**

This examination will help your doctor to make a correct diagnosis or decision about your treatment. You may be having a cystogram to check for any problems, such as repeated urinary tract infections or urinary incontinence, or it may be a follow-up examination after an operation. The examination can also look for structural problems of the bladder or if there has been injury to the bladder. If you have any questions about the examination please contact the doctor who referred you for it.

## **What are the risks?**

There is a small risk of causing a urine infection (cystitis) or making an existing urine infection worse when a catheter is inserted for any reason. If you get new urinary symptoms which last for days after the procedure you need to get in touch with your GP surgery for advice.

The radiation dose is about the same as the average person receives from background radiation over 8-10 months. Special precautions are taken to keep the radiation dose to a minimum.

## **What if I am pregnant?**

This examination should not be for women who are pregnant. Please advise the department if you think you are or might be pregnant.

## **Is there any special preparation?**

There is no specific preparation for a cystogram examination. Please arrive promptly for your appointment to help us prevent any delays. Continue to take your medicines as you normally would.

## **Will I feel any pain?**

There may be some discomfort when the catheter is inserted but this should not be painful. Some people experience discomfort during urination immediately after the procedure. This discomfort usually gets better under 12 hours.

## **What happens after the procedure?**

There are no after-effects of the examination. Once you are happy to leave, you are free to do so. Please contact your GP or referring team if you feel unwell in the few days following the examination.

## **When will I get the results?**

The images taken during the examination are studied by the radiologist at a later date. They will then produce a detailed report and send this to the doctor who referred you for the test. Your referring doctor will then discuss the results and any treatment you may need, with you. This is generally around 2 weeks after the examination.