

Medical help via your GP / local minor injuries unit should be sought if there are any signs of the following:

- Excessive bleeding from the site
- Increased pain, swelling, redness or warmth
- Swelling in the neck, armpit or groin
- Fever / chills

If you are unable to attend this appointment please let the department know ASAP, the appointment can be used by another patient.

Useful contact numbers

X-Ray / Ultrasound **020 8909 5443**

MRI / CT / Nuclear Medicine **020 8909 5801**

DXA **020 8909 5476**

Pre operative assessment **020 8909 5630**

NHS

**Royal National
Orthopaedic Hospital**
NHS Trust



A patient's guide to

Discogram

If you would like this leaflet translated into another language/large print, please contact the Quality Team on 020 8909 5439.

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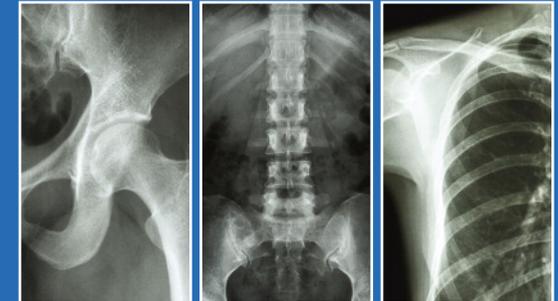
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A Discogram is a procedure that uses x-radiation, to demonstrate distortions or abnormalities of the discs between the spinal vertebrae. This is done using an x-ray dye (contrast) is used to show the area well on x-ray. The machine used to produce the images is a large curved arm which moves around you during the procedure and the radiology staff stay in the room with you for the procedure.

Before the procedure

We require you to contact the department if any of the following apply to you, if the department is not contacted before the appointment and any are applicable to you the appointment may be cancelled:

- You are taking anti-coagulants (blood thinning medication) such as **Warfarin, Aspirin, Clopidogrel, Rivaroxaban** or **Apixaban**
- If you have recently been diagnosed with a DVT or a suspected DVT and your medication is still ongoing
- You are on or have recently been taken off **Antibiotics**
- If you have had a reaction to iodine-based dye (contrast) in the past
- You have a concern you may have an infection
- Any allergies to medications
- Severe needle phobia.

Contact number: **020 8909 5801**

For this procedure you will be admitted into a ward the morning of the procedure. You will be allowed to leave the same day providing there are no complications (which is very rare). When you have been admitted you will be called to the x-ray department at the time of your scan. This can be any time between 9 and 1.

In the room

You will be asked into the room where a nurse / helper / radiographer will help you change if required. They are there to help with the procedure and ensure you are at ease throughout.

The radiologist will carry out the procedure. If you have a latex allergy please inform the staff in the room.

The procedure is a simple fluoroscopy x-ray to start, this is to locate the area the injection needs to be placed in. The radiologist will use a will use a permanent marker to mark the injection site.

The second part of the procedure uses an aseptic (clean) technique which includes using a needle to inject the contrast into the discs. Your skin will be washed and a sterile cover will be placed over the area of entry. Local anaesthetic will be injected to numb the area to be examined, which may sting for a couple of seconds before it goes numb.

After this it is normal to feel some pressure during the procedure but it should not be too painful. The needle will be guided to the area of interest by the radiologist using the fluoroscopy machine for guidance.

The contrast may be injected at multiple levels depending on what the referrer is looking for.

A dressing is used at the end of the procedure and needs to be kept clean and dry for the rest of the day.

You will be sent back to the ward after the procedure when you can be monitored for a short time.

Important aftercare

You should avoid strenuous activity for a few days after the procedure. The area that has been injected may be sore for a number of days. Normal pain medication can be taken as usual.

Following the injection, the local anaesthetic will begin to wear off after 1 to 2 hours. You may experience worsening symptoms during the first 24 to 48 hours. Your normal pain control may be taken, if the pain is severe or increasing after the first 48 hours please seek medical help.

The scans will be analysed by the radiologist and the results will be available in 2 weeks. The results will be available for the outpatient appointment with your consultant after the procedure. If you do not have a follow up please contact the consultant's secretary.