

# CT Cisternogram

## Patient Information



## What is a CT Cisternogram?

A Computed Tomography (CT) Cisternogram is an imaging procedure used to diagnose Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) leakage from the brain. CSF is a watery liquid that circulates through the brain's ventricles (cavities or hollow spaces), around the surface of the brain and around the spinal cord. A CSF leak is a condition in which the CSF seeps out of the nose or the ear because of a defect in the Dura (outermost covering of the brain and spinal cord) or the skull.

When a CSF leak occurs, it may cause any or all of the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Nasal discharge
- Fever and neck stiffness (symptoms of meningitis or infection of the brain)
- Visual disturbances
- Tinnitus (ringing in the ear)

## How do I prepare for the procedure?

- Take an antihistamine tablet as prescribed by your physician before the procedure.
- Do not eat or drink 3 hours before the procedure.
- You may be asked to get some new laboratory tests. These include PT, a PTT, INR, and platelet count.
- Tell your doctor, if you are taking any blood thinning medications, as these may need to be stopped.

## What will happen during the procedure?

- You will be asked to lie on your stomach on the CT scan table.
- Initially, plain CT scan images will be taken.
- Afterwards, you will be moved to a fluoroscopic X-ray room on a stretcher.
- A local anaesthetic will be injected to the back to numb the area.
- A needle will be advanced under fluoroscopic (live X-ray imaging) guidance until it reaches within the spinal canal.
- A nonionic myelographic contrast material will be injected and the radiologist will monitor the flow of contrast material.
- You will be moved back to the CT scan table in the CT scan suite.
- The table will be tilted so the head side is down.
- Another series of images will be taken to find out the accurate place of CSF leakage by comparing post-contrast images with pre-contrast images.

## Will the procedure hurt?

- You may feel a slight pain when the local anaesthetic is injected, after which the area will become numb.
- Please contact your doctor if you have any signs of an allergic reaction, which include, itching, redness, difficulty breathing, swelling or dizziness.

## Post-procedure care

- Keep your head elevated with the help of 2 pillows to avoid persistent headaches.

- You may walk after the procedure. However, it is advised that you do not walk unnecessarily for 24 hours to prevent headaches.
- Take painkillers if you experience a headache or pain on needle insertion site.
- Use plenty of fluids to drain contrast dye from the blood vessels.

### **Please note the following:**

- Please bring your doctor's prescription and previous medical and radiology records on the day of the procedure.
- Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your appointment for registration and other formalities. In case of late arrival, your appointment may be delayed or rescheduled for any other day.
- Patients requiring urgent care may be given priority. This may lead to a slight delay in starting your procedure. Your cooperation in this regard will be highly appreciated.
- If there is a possibility that you might be pregnant, please inform your physician prior to the test. Your physician may need to postpone or cancel the test.
- Please discuss any concerns you may have about the procedure with your physician.
- It is advisable to bring an attendant with you.
- If you have any queries, please contact us.

To book an appointment, call 021 34930051. Alternatively, you may book your appointment at the Aga Khan University Hospital Contact Centre at 021-111-911-911.