

Inferior Vena Caval Filter

Patient Information



Why do I need an IVC Filter placement?

IVC Filter is a medical device used to curtail the advancement of a pulmonary embolism, or a clot that has travelled from elsewhere, such as your thigh or leg, into your heart/pulmonary arteries. Pulmonary embolism can be a life threatening condition, and if you develop it, and cannot be given blood thinners due to any reason, you may be advised to undergo an IVC filter placement. This filter helps prevent the blood clot from travelling to the heart and lungs by trapping the clot itself.

Who will be conducting this procedure?

A specially trained radiologist called an Interventional Radiologist will perform this procedure. Interventional Radiologists are specialists who are trained to use imaging modalities to treat certain conditions using your blood vessels.

How do I prepare for the procedure?

- Stop eating or drinking six hours before the test. You may continue taking your medicines with water. Please consult your doctor if you are on diabetes medication.
- Inform your doctor if you have any allergies or have had a bad reaction to any procedure in the past.
- Inform your doctor if you are taking any blood thinning medications, as these may need to be stopped before the procedure.
- You may be asked to get some new laboratory tests including PT, aPTT, INR, and platelet count.

What happens during IVC Filter placement?

- You will be asked to lie down on your back on an x-ray table.
- A cannula (thin tube to administer medication) will then be inserted in your arm so that if required, the interventional radiologist can give you medicines to make you feel relaxed.
- Sensors will be attached to your body to monitor your vitals.
- Local anaesthesia will be injected at the site where the radiologist will enter your blood vessel. A small incision (cut) will be made to gain access to the blood vessel.
- This will be followed by inserting a vascular sheath. This sheath helps introduce a catheter (tube) into the blood vessel.
- The catheter will then be advanced through the neck or leg to a major abdominal vein known as inferior vena cava.
- The contrast will be injected through the catheter and images will be taken of the inferior vena cava.
- Subsequently, the filter will be passed through the catheter and then placed in the inferior vena cava.
- This will filter your blood by trapping dislodged pieces of the clot as they flow from your legs towards your heart or lungs.
- After placing the filter, the catheter will be removed and pressure will be applied over the puncture site.
- After making sure there is no excessive bleeding, a bandage will be placed over the site which can be removed after 24 hours.

Will it hurt?

- You may feel slight pain when a local anaesthetic is injected, after which the area will become numb.
- You may also feel a warm sensation when the contrast media is injected. However, the feeling will subside in a while.

How long will the process take?

The process may take about 30 minutes to complete.

What happens afterwards and what precautions do I need to take?

- If your leg is used to introduce the filter, you will have to lie flat on your back for two hours.
- If your neck is used to introduce the filter, you may resume normal activities in an hour.
- Drink plenty of fluids unless your doctor has told you otherwise. This will help clear the contrast material from your body.
- Do not climb stairs or lift heavy objects for the 48 hours following the procedure. Also do not drive for 24 hours.
- If you have pain or bleeding from the site where the catheter was inserted, please let your doctor know.

Are there any risks or complications of the procedure?

- Bleeding can occur from the site where the catheter was introduced into the body.
- Blood can also start collecting under your skin. This is known as a hematoma.
- If bleeding occurs, lie down and ask someone to apply pressure at the bleeding site for 10 minutes. Keep lying down for an hour after the bleeding stops.
- If bleeding reoccurs, reapply pressure. If it does not stop, come to the emergency department at AKUH.
- Please contact your doctor if you have fever or any signs of an allergic reaction which include itching, redness, difficulty breathing, swelling or dizziness.

Scheduling an appointment

Contact the AKUH Radiology Department reception at 021-3486-2057 between Monday and Saturday from 8:30 am to 5:15 pm, except on gazette holidays, to book your appointment.

How can I get my radiology films and reports?

Reports and films can be collected 24 hours after the procedure from the radiology delivery counter from 8:30 am to 8:30 pm.

Please note the following:

- Bring your doctor's prescription and previous medical/radiology records on the day of the procedure.
- Arrive 15 minutes prior to your appointment for registration and other formalities. In case of late arrival, your appointment may be delayed/rescheduled for another 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 you are pregnant, inform your physician prior to the test. Your appointment may need to be rescheduled or cancelled.
- It is advisable to bring an attendant with you.
- If you have any queries please contact us at 021-111-911-911.