

Arthrogram



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515-226-9810

What is an Arthrogram?

Arthrography is the x-ray examination of a joint that uses a special form of x-ray called fluoroscopy and a contrast material containing iodine.

Fluoroscopy makes it possible to see internal joints in motion. When iodine is injected into the joint space, it coats the inner lining of the joint structures and appears bright white on an arthrogram, allowing the radiologist to assess the anatomy and function of the joint.

CPT Codes

73040 Shoulder (most common)

73580 Knee

73525 Hip

73115 Wrist

73085 Elbow

(See alternative coding used by our billing on following page)

Indications

diagnose persistent unexplained joint pain or identify abnormalities in the shoulder (rotator cuff tear), knee, wrist, elbow or ankle

Contraindications

pregnancy, allergy to iodine, known infection on or around the joint

How Does Your Patient Prepare?

There is no special preparation required. Patients on coumadin should stop taking their medication 3 days before the procedure. Patients on Plavix/Ticlid/Aggrenox need to stop taking medications 3 days before the exam. Your patient may be asked to wear a gown.

If a recent x-ray (post injury) has been done, please send it along, or send and order and we will perform an x-ray prior to the exam.

What Happens During the Test?

A medical history of your patient will be obtained and he is positioned on the examination table.

Next, the skin around the joint is cleansed with antiseptic and a local anesthetic is injected into the area. A needle with a is then inserted into the joint space. The needle is then removed to prevent the contrast material and/or air from escaping. Your patient will be asked to move the affected joint to distribute the contrast material throughout the space. Still images are then obtained with the joint in various positions.

The examination is usually completed within 30 minutes.

After The Exam

Your patient should refrain from intense physical exercise. Expect some tenderness. Rest the joint for about 12 hours. Do not participate in any strenuous activity for one to two days. Use ice and ibuprofen for any swelling and pain.

The Results

A radiologist will analyze the images and send a signed report to the referring physician within 1 business day.

(Information adapted from www.radiologyinfo.org.)

Dr. James Choi and Dr. Paul Keller)

This manual is intended for use as merely a guideline for referring physicians and their staff only. It contains information pertaining to the most commonly ordered exams and indications. However, Iowa Radiology does not recommend any particular examination. Individual radiologist preference or patient circumstances may dictate ordering alternative studies. Although contrast codes are not needed to place an order, the following contrast codes may be used in placing orders: CT Contrast Q9967, MRI contrast A9577 and A9579.

(Additional codes: Injection portion: 23350 shoulder, 27370 knee, 27093 hip, 25246 wrist per compartment injected. MRI under fluoroscopic guidance: 77002 and 73222 shoulder, 77002 and 73722 knee, 77002 and 73722 hip, and 77002 and 73222 wrist.