

**HOWELL ALLEN CLINIC  
2214 ELLISTON PLACE, SUITE 200  
NASHVILLE, TN. 37203**

**DISCOGRAM INSTRUCTIONS**

*Your doctor has requested that you have a discogram. This is a special x-ray test that allows a thorough evaluation of the discs. The test may be done for the neck (cervical), Mid-back (thoracic) or the lower back (lumbar). The procedure is very similar, regardless of the area being studied.*

**PREPARING FOR YOUR TEST:**

- 1. Do not eat solid food 4 hours prior to your scheduled exam time. Do not drink fluids 2 hours prior to your exam.**
- 2. If you are taking pain medications, do not take 4 hours prior to your exam. *If you are taking medication for high blood pressure and heart problems, you may take your medications as usual.***
- 3. If you are taking “blood thinning” medications; we MUST have a letter from the prescribing physician giving permission for you to stop the medication for the allotted time period. *Do not stop your medication until you have discussed this with your doctor and have written permission.* The letter can be faxed to us at 615-341-3555.**

Ticlid (ticlopidine)	Must be stopped <b>14 days</b> prior to procedure
Effient (prasugrel)	Must be stopped <b>10 days</b> prior to procedure
Plavix (clopidogrel) Pletal (cilostazol)	Must be stopped <b>7 days</b> prior to procedure
Coumadin (warfarin) Dicumerol / dicumarol Elmiron	Must be stopped <b>5 days</b> prior to procedure
Pradaxa (dabigatran etexilate ) Persantine (dipyridamole) Aggrenox	Must be stopped <b>3 days</b> prior to procedure
Heparin Lovenox	Must be stopped <b>24 hours</b> prior to procedure
Aspirin 325mg	Must be stopped 3 days prior to procedure <b>only</b> if taking with one of the above meds.

**! Do not stop your medication until your procedure is scheduled.**

! Aspirin and NSAID (Advil, Naprosyn, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Feldene, etc) may be continued if no other anticoagulants are being administered. **If on an anticoagulant that is being stopped, discontinue aspirin 3 days prior to procedure and NSAID 1 day prior.**

**! If you are on a blood thinner not listed, contact the facility for instructions.**

! If there is a possibility you could be **pregnant**, inform the center prior to your procedure.

! If you are allergic to **Iodine or X-ray dye**, inform the center prior to your procedure. If you have a **Latex allergy**, please notify the facility.

**! You must have a driver to drive you home.** Procedure will be cancelled if you do not have a driver. This is for your safety and the safety of others.

**! Please arrive 1 hr prior to your appointment time (except if scheduled at 7:30 you may arrive at 7:00).** This allows us time to complete the necessary paper work and nursing assessments prior to the procedure. (Be sure to allow driving time for Nashville traffic).

## **AFTER THE PROCEDURE:**

! You will be told to go home and rest the remainder of the day

! Take your regular medications as prescribed **except** for the blood thinning medications: **resume Coumadin at bedtime on day of the procedure. Resume all other blood thinning medications the day following your procedure, unless directed to do otherwise by prescribing doctor.**

! Some patients feel an increase in the usual pain for a few days.

! Notify your doctor at Howell Allen Clinic at 615-327-9543 or 800- 668-9410 or go to nearest emergency room if you develop **fever, chills, new arm or leg weakness, severe pain, headache or loss of bowel/bladder control.**

*We ask that you do not wear perfume or cologne when coming to this facility.*

## **WHAT IS A DISCOGRAM:**

### **What is it?**

- A discogram is a diagnostic procedure to determine if your disc (s) is/are your source of pain

**Who benefits?**

- Patients with possible disc pain.

**Purpose:**

- Identify specific discs contributing to the pain. The results are then used to try more advanced treatment options.

**How it is done?**

- First, an IV is started and you may be given an antibiotic prior to procedure (for cervical/neck discs) and medicine to help you relax/pain relief. The area will be cleaned. The doctor will numb the area and a needle is inserted into each disc to be tested. An x-ray fluoroscope is used to help guiding the needle insertion.

**What to expect:**

- If the disc is the source of your back/neck or extremity pain, the injection will temporarily reproduce your symptoms; thus resulting a positive discogram. If the disc is not the source of your pain, the injection will not reproduce your familiar pain or symptoms, resulting in a negative discogram. Following the procedure you may experience some additional discomfort. You will then return to your original state within one week.

After the injections, you will have a CT scan and be held for 30 minutes before discharge.

**HOWELL ALLEN IMAGING CENTER  
2214 ELLISTON PLACE, ST #200  
NASHVILLE, TN 37203**

**615-327-9543 ext 3540**

*(If you have not been contacted by a nurse in 1-2 days prior to your procedure, please call the facility @ the number above to give us medical information)*