

Breast Imaging Suite

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ARTHROGRAPHY

An arthrogram is an examination of a joint that uses a special form of X-ray called fluoroscopy and contrast material (X-ray dye). During the exam, the radiologist injects X-ray dye into the joint space while watching with the fluoroscopic X-ray machine to evaluate conditions of the joint.

The exam is usually ordered by your physician to evaluate for ligament damage or cartilage tears. The most common areas studied include the shoulder, knee, and hip.

PREPARATION

No preparation is required.

THE PROCEDURE

The technologist will bring you to the X-ray room. The procedure will be explained to you and you will be asked to sign a consent form.

The area around your joint will be washed with antiseptic soap and covered with a sterile drape or towel. The radiologist will use a small needle to numb (anesthetize) the area being examined. A special needle is then inserted into the joint space through which the X-ray dye is administered. The X-ray dye outlines the joint structures making them visible under X-ray.

Depending on your exam, a CT scan or MRI may follow your arthrogram. The arthrogram typically requires 30 minutes. When combined with a CT scan or MRI, the procedure may take up to 90 minutes.

AFTER THE EXAM

Your joint may be tender for up to a day after the exam. This is normal and should not be cause for concern. Moving or exercising the joint will help this feeling pass. Report any increased pain or fever to your doctor promptly.

The radiologist, physician specially trained in interpreting medical imaging, will analyze your exam and provide your doctor with a detailed report. Your physician will then discuss the results with you as it pertains to your health.