



Venography

This information sheet from Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) explains about the venography procedure, what it involves and what to expect when your child comes to GOSH to have one.



What is venography?

Venography is a procedure that allows doctors to look at the veins in your child's body in great detail using x-rays. It is used to help make a diagnosis or to plan treatment.

Venography produces a venogram, which is an image of the veins in your child's body. A venogram looks a little like a road map, showing the path of the veins and their junctions. Any part of the body can be studied using venography so it can be used for a wide variety of conditions.

It is carried out in the Department of Radiology by a doctor (radiologist) or specialist nurse.

What happens before the venography?

You will already have received information about how to prepare your child for the procedure in your admission letter. You may need to come to GOSH before the venogram so that your child can have a pre-admission assessment to check that they are well enough. This appointment may involve taking blood samples and other tests.

The doctor will explain the procedure and discuss any questions you may have. They may ask you to sign a consent form giving permission for your child to have the venogram. If your child has any medical problems, please tell the doctors. As contrast liquid (which shows up well on x-rays) is used during the procedure, which is removed from the body through



urination (peeing), please tell the doctors if your child has any kidney problems.

Many of the studies we perform involve the use of x-rays. Legally, we are obliged to ask any girls over the age of 12 whether there is any chance they might be pregnant. This is to protect babies in the womb from receiving unnecessary radiation.

What does the venography involve?

Venography is usually done while your child is awake, although if they are young or the procedure could be lengthy, general anaesthesia may be offered.

When your child is ready for the procedure, either awake or under general anaesthetic, the radiologist will put a cannula (thin plastic tube) into a vein in your child's hand or foot. They will inject contrast, a liquid that shows up well on x-rays, into the cannula and take a series of x-rays as the contrast flows through the veins. The contrast liquid will feel warm as it is injected but not uncomfortable. Your child will need to lie very still while the pictures are taken, and may be asked to hold their breath at different parts of the procedure. At the end of the test, the cannula is removed.

Are there any risks?

Complications of venography are extremely rare. In very young children, venography tends to be carried out while the child is under general anaesthetic. Although every anaesthetic carries a risk, this is extremely small.

Are there any alternatives to venography?

The doctor may be able to gain information about your child's blood vessels using another type of imaging procedure, such as ultrasound, MRI or CT scan. Usually, venography gives more detailed pictures than other types of scans.

Venography is often just one of many tests and procedures your child will have to help the doctors make a diagnosis or monitor treatment. Venography is not usually carried out unless less invasive tests cannot provide the necessary information.

What happens afterwards?

Your child will be able to go home after the procedure, if they have no other tests or procedures scheduled. If they have had a general anaesthetic, they will return to the ward after they have recovered. Some children feel sick and vomit after a general anaesthetic. Your child may have a headache or sore throat or feel dizzy, but these side effects are usually short-lived and not severe. Your child can start eating and drinking as normal once they feel like it.

Getting the results

The pictures taken during the procedure need to be studied carefully by the radiologist, who will write a report for your child's doctor. The results will not be available straightaway and usually we will make an outpatient appointment to discuss them with you.

If you have any questions, please telephone 020 7405 9200 and ask for the ward from which your child was discharged