



Nuclear Medicine Cisternogram

Exam scheduling

(218)249-5593

St. Luke's

(218)249-5555

Diagnostic Imaging

(218)249-5222

www.slhduluth.com/hospital/imaging/

Exam Information

Diagnostic Imaging

What is a Cisternogram?

Cisternography uses a small amount of radioactive material (no side effects) to evaluate the flow of cerebral spinal fluid around the brain and spinal cord. It is usually done in the diagnosis of normal pressure hydrocephalus, detection of cerebral spinal fluid leaks, and for the evaluation of ventricular shunt patency.

How is the exam performed?

If a leak is suspected, you will have pledgets (tufts of cotton or gauze) placed in your nose by a specialist before this procedure.

The radiologist will go over the risks of the exam before cleaning an area of your back and injecting the local anesthetic.

Next, the doctor uses fluoroscopy (real-time, moving x-ray pictures) to insert a needle into the space around the spinal cord. Following this lumbar puncture procedure you should remain on your back for several hours to prevent a headache.

The technologist will bring you to the Nuclear Medicine Dept. on a stretcher, and will take pictures over the injection site while you are lying down.

After imaging, you will return to the Day Surgery area until the radiologist permits you to leave (usually several hours). You will need to return to Nuclear Medicine for imaging at 24, 48, and 72 hours.

This test takes 3 days to complete. Each day, imaging will take approximately 30 minutes.

How should I prepare for the exam?

- Refer to prep instructions for lumbar puncture procedure.

What will I feel during the exam?

There will be some discomfort during the lumbar puncture on the first day. There are no side effects to the radioactive material.

Who interprets the exam and when will I get my results?

After the exam, a radiologist who is specially trained to interpret Cisternograms will review your images and send a written report to the physician that ordered the exam for you. That physician will then contact you with your results.