

Cavernosal Duplex Scan (Color Doppler of the Penis)

A cavernosal duplex scan uses sound waves to see how well the blood flows through the arteries to the penis. Proper arterial blood flow is needed for erections to occur. Two sets of blood flow images are obtained. When the penis is:

*No smoking
on the day
of your test.*

- Flaccid (not erect)
- Erect (after prostaglandin is injected)

This test helps find out if changes in blood flow are the cause of erectile dysfunction. A nurse conducts the exam and is assisted by a technologist (tech).

The test is done in the Vascular Lab. Most often, your stay in the lab is about 60 minutes, but may last up to 2 hours.

Before the Test

Do not smoke on the day of your test. There are no other preparations for this test.

On the day of the exam, plan to arrive 10 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test
- Medical insurance information
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)
- Check or credit card (if your insurance does not cover this test)

For their own safety, children under the age of 16 may not visit in the testing area. They may stay in the waiting room with a responsible adult.

Please come to the Galter Pavilion, 201 E. Huron St., and check in at the reception desk on the 8th floor.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 E. Huron, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you.

Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions; 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24 hour desk near the Superior entrance).

During the Test

You will be given a sheet and asked to remove all clothing below the waist. While you lie on a bed or table, a warm, clear gel is applied to the penis. Then the nurse moves a small, hand-held device (transducer) against the skin on the shaft of the penis. The transducer transmits sound waves to a monitor, where images of arteries and blood flow are seen by the tech and saved for later review.

Next the nurse injects prostaglandin into the penis. A very tiny needle (finer than a strand of hair) is used. This medication causes the blood vessels in the penis to enlarge and usually results in an erection after about 10 to 20 minutes. Once the penis is erect, the scan is repeated.

If the injection causes a rigid erection, some pain in the penis may occur. These erections usually go away within 1 to 2 hours, as does the pain.

After the Test

The nurse monitors the erection. Once the erection becomes less firm, you are free to leave. If the erection persists for more than an hour, a medication is given to allow the penis to return to a relaxed state. You may resume your normal diet and activities.

Most often, test results are sent to your doctor within 2 to 3 business days.

If you have questions about this test, please contact the urology staff at 312-926-4666.

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

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Developed by: Vascular Laboratory

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For more information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit www.nmh.org.

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