

Retrograde Urethrogram

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout explains how a retrograde urethrogram works, how to prepare, what to expect, and how to get your results.

What is a retrograde urethrogram?

A *retrograde urethrogram* is an X-ray exam of the *urethra*, the tube that carries urine from the bladder to the outside of the body. The exam is used to diagnose problems in the urethra.

How does the exam work?

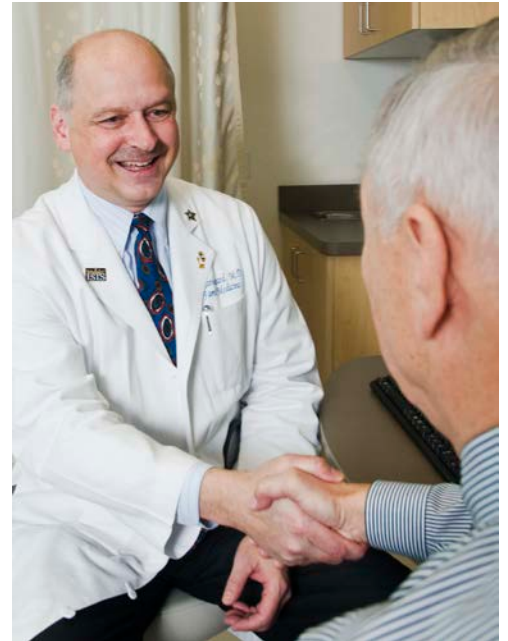
- A *catheter* (a small, sterile tube) is put into your urethra, and it is filled with *contrast* (X-ray dye). Contrast helps details show more clearly in the X-ray images.
- Small amounts of X-rays are passed through your body. Pictures of the inside of your body will show on a monitor.
- You do not need to have *sedation* (relaxing medicine) for this exam.

How do I prepare?

- Tell your provider about:
 - Recent illnesses or other medical conditions
 - Allergies you have to medicines, especially if you have ever had a reaction to contrast
- *Women*: Tell your provider if there is any chance you are pregnant.
- Do not wear jewelry or clothes with snaps, zippers, or other metal.

What can I expect?

- You may be asked to change into a gown and remove your undergarments.



Talk with your referring provider about the results of your exam.

- You will empty your bladder right before the exam.

How is the exam done?

- You will lie on an exam table. The radiology technologist may help you get in the right position.
- A few X-rays will be taken before the contrast is given.
- Your genital area will be cleaned with special antiseptic soap.
- A catheter will be placed into your urethra and contrast will be injected.
- The radiologist will take more X-rays with a *fluoroscope* (a type of X-ray machine).
- The catheter will be removed at the end of the exam.

What will I feel during the exam?

- When your genital area is washed, the soap may feel cool.
- You may feel some discomfort when the catheter is placed and your urethra is filled with contrast. Tell your radiologist if you are very uncomfortable.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

A *radiologist* is a doctor who is skilled in reading radiology exams. A radiologist who is trained to interpret retrograde urethrograms will review your X-rays and send a report to your primary care or referring provider. The radiologist will talk with you about your exam and X-ray images.

Your own provider will give you your results. You may also read your results on your eCare Results page. If you need copies of your images on disc, call Radiology Records at 206.598.6206.

You and your provider will decide the next step, such as treatment for a problem, as needed.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- UWMC Imaging Services: 206.598.6200
- HMC Imaging Services: 206.744.3105