

# Arterial Doppler Study

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## KEY POINTS

- An arterial Doppler study is a test that uses sound waves (ultrasound) to show your provider the blood flow in your arteries.
  - A sensor held against your skin sends sound waves into your blood vessels. A computer uses echoes of the sound waves to show blood flow.
  - Talk to your healthcare provider about what the test results mean and ask any questions you have.
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## What is an arterial Doppler study?

An arterial Doppler study is a test that uses sound waves (ultrasound) to show your provider the blood flow in your arteries.

## When is it used?

The test is usually done to look for narrowing, weakness, or blockages of:

- The artery in your neck that carries blood to your brain (the carotid artery)
- Leg arteries that may cause pain in your legs when you walk
- Blood vessels in your arm

The results can help your provider decide if you need treatment to widen an artery, remove a blockage, or bypass an artery.

## How do I prepare for the procedure?

Usually no preparation is needed for this procedure.

- You may or may not need to take your regular medicines the day of the procedure. Tell your healthcare provider about all medicines and supplements that you take. Some products may increase your risk of side effects. Ask your healthcare provider if you need to avoid taking any medicine or supplements before the procedure.
- Tell your healthcare provider if you have any food, medicine, or other allergies such as latex.
- Follow any other instructions your healthcare provider gives you.
- Ask any questions you have before the procedure. You should understand what your healthcare provider is going to do. You have the right to make decisions about your healthcare and to give permission for any tests or procedures.

## **What happens during the procedure?**

The procedure usually takes about 45 minutes.

You will lie on a table and a technologist will put clear jelly on your skin over the arteries that are being checked. The jelly helps send sound waves through your skin more easily. A sensor held against your skin sends high-frequency sound waves into your blood vessels. A computer uses echoes of the ultrasound waves to show blood flow in your blood vessels.

## **What happens after the procedure?**

After the procedure, you can usually go home and go back to normal activities.

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions. Ask your healthcare provider:

- How and when you will get your test results
- What symptoms or problems you should watch for and what to do if you have them

Make sure you know when you should come back for a checkup. Keep all appointments for provider visits or tests.

## **What are the risks of this procedure?**

There is no risk with this procedure.

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Developed by Change Healthcare.

Published by Change Healthcare.

Produced in Cork, Ireland.