

Pump Debugging and Myelograms

PROCEDURE:

Debugging is generally done when there is an unexpectedly large residual volume or a pump stall is suspected.

It involves a rotor test on Synchronised pumps, the injection of a small volume of contrast, normal saline and sometimes local anaesthetic under xray guidance into the pump side-port to determine if the catheter is patent and the pump is working properly.

Occasionally a nuclear medicine scan is also required.

Ladies, if there is a chance of you being pregnant, please tell us before the procedure.

RISKS:

The pump debug and myelogram are generally well tolerated.

The main risk is the very small chance (< 1%) of fitting. If this happens, it may require hospitalisation. There may be an unwanted bolus medication effect, if the drug in the catheter can't be aspirated before the injection of contrast.

The injection of local anaesthetic may give a small volume spinal anaesthetic with numbness and weakness lasting several hours.

Occasionally, some people feel generally unwell following myelograms and hospitalisation for a day or two may be required.

POST PUMP DEBUG/MYELOGRAM INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The procedure is generally performed in the morning and the patient is normally observed for 4 hours after the procedure. If all is well, the patient is then allowed to go home to rest in bed, with the head of the bed elevated at least 30° for 24h.
2. Protect and support the affected area if weakness or paralysis occurs.
3. The patient should avoid strenuous exercise for 24 hours, then gradually return to normal activity.
4. If the patient complains of a postural headache - lying flat (supine) may provide rapid relief.
5. Headaches may be treated with appropriate analgesics, such as paracetamol or aspirin.
6. Drink 2-3 litres of fluids and follow normal diet.
7. Pulse and BP are to be checked 1/2 hourly for 2-4hours, then 4hourly for 12-24h if a hospital inpatient.
8. Report: hives, skin rash, swollen eyes or wheeze (bronchospasm).
9. There is a small chance of fitting and drugs that lower the seizure threshold including phenothiazines like Stemetil and Largactil should be avoided for 1-2 days after Myelograms.