

VASCULAR ULTRASOUND

What is a vascular ultrasound test?

The vascular lab is able to diagnose disease in arteries and veins in many areas of the body using ultrasound imaging and other noninvasive diagnostic procedures, such as blood pressures and Doppler devices. No needles or radiation are used during the exams.

What happens during my exam?

If your doctor orders a test to assess your arteries, you may be asked to partially disrobe and put on a hospital gown. The technologist will use an ultrasound imager to look directly at the arteries. In addition, if we are studying your arms or legs, blood pressures may be taken on several places on your limbs. If you are having trouble walking, the test may include one minute of light exercise to see how your circulation holds up when you are walking.

If your doctor is more concerned about veins, your technologist will use an ultrasound imager to view the veins directly in order to see if there are blood clots present.

Will the examination be painful?

During diagnostic studies of the arteries some people experience discomfort when blood pressures are taken on their arms or legs. Let the technologist know if the procedure is too uncomfortable. The exam can be modified to obtain a minimum amount of diagnostic information while still ensuring an accurate test.

When veins are examined with ultrasound, it is necessary for the technologist to try to compress the veins shut under ultrasound guidance. This occasionally causes discomfort. Keep the technologist informed about any discomfort so the test can be completed with a minimum of problems.

Will dye be injected into my arteries or veins?

No injections or radiation are used during noninvasive examinations.

How long will the test take?

Arterial tests of the legs can take over an hour to complete. Other exams can take from half an hour to one hour, depending on which test the physician orders.

How will I know the results?

An interpreted report by a specialist will be sent to your physician. Your physician will contact you in the normal way they usually contact you with test results. Please let the technologist know of where your last vascular ultrasound was performed, this can help assist them in finding any previous studies if needed.

If you have any questions, you may call the Radiology Department directly at 503-399-2484.

