Intravenous Pyelogram (IVP)

Appointment Information

Date: _____ **Time:** _____ **Location:** _____

Address: _____

Notes: _____

_____

About

An intravenous pyelogram (IVP) is an x-ray examination that scans the kidneys, ureters and urinary bladder with the use of iodinated contrast material injected into veins.

When a contrast material is injected into a vein in your arm, it travels through the blood stream and collects in the kidneys and urinary tract, turning these areas bright white on the x-ray images. An IVP allows the radiologist to view and assess the anatomy and function of the kidneys, ureters and the bladder.

An intravenous pyelogram examination helps radiologists assess abnormalities in the urinary system, as well as how quickly and efficiently your system is able to handle fluid waste.

The exam is used to help diagnose symptoms such as blood in the urine or pain in the side or lower back.

The IVP exam can enable the radiologist to detect problems within the urinary tract resulting from:

- Kidney stones
- Enlarged prostate
- Tumors in the kidney, ureters or urinary bladder
- Surgery on the urinary tract
- Congenital anomalies of the urinary tract

This IVP examination is usually done on an outpatient basis. During the exam, you will be positioned on the table while x-ray images are taken. The contrast material is then injected, usually in a vein in your arm, followed by additional still images. The number of images taken depends on the reason for the examination and your anatomy.

You must hold very still and may be asked to keep from breathing for a few seconds while the x-ray picture is taken to reduce the possibility of a blurred image. The technologist will walk behind a wall or into the next room to activate the x-ray machine.

As the contrast material is processed by the kidneys, a series of images is taken to determine the actual size of the kidneys and to capture the urinary tract in action as it begins to empty. The technologist may apply a compression band around the body to better visualize the urinary structures leading from the kidney.

When the examination is complete, you will be asked to wait until the radiologist determines that all the necessary images have been obtained.

An IVP study is usually completed within an hour. However, because some kidneys function at a slower rate, the exam may last up to four hours.

Preparations

You will be given detailed instructions on how to prepare for your Intravenous Pyelogram (IVP) study when you schedule your exam.

You will likely be instructed not to eat or drink after midnight on the night before your exam. You may also be asked to take a mild laxative (in either pill or liquid form) the evening before the procedure.

You should inform your radiologist of any medications you are taking and if you have any allergies, especially to barium or iodinated contrast materials. Also inform them about recent illnesses or other medical conditions.

You may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and to wear a gown during the exam. You may also be asked to remove jewelry, removable dental appliances, eye glasses and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the x-ray images.

Women should always inform their radiologist and x-ray technologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant.