

Retrograde Urethrogram (RUG)

What is a Retrograde Urethrogram - or a RUG?

A retrograde urethrogram allows us to evaluate any structural abnormalities in the urethra including narrowed areas (strictures or contractures) and outpouchings (diverticulum). This diagnostic test is commonly performed in male patients when narrowing of the urethra is suspected.

How will this test be done?

The procedure will last about 5 minutes. You will be asked to lie on your side on an x-ray table. A sterile drape will be placed to provide privacy. Your urethral opening will be cleansed to eliminate any bacteria on the surface. Sterile clear liquid (dye) will be placed directly into the urethra and x-rays will be taken to record what your anatomy looks like. You may feel a sensation of coolness as the dye enters your urethra and bladder. The fluid may drip onto your skin as the x-rays are being performed. If you are interested, you can also see the x-rays on the monitor.

How do I prepare for this test?

You do not have to do anything special to prepare for this test. You should eat and drink as you normally would. This test is done in the clinic and does not require sedation or anesthesia. If you do not currently have a catheter in your bladder, be prepared to give a urine sample when you arrive at the clinic. If you have a catheter in your bladder, the study will be done with the catheter in place. If you are not currently taking an antibiotic, you will be given one prior to the test.

What to expect after the test:

It is normal to feel some irritation with urination for 24-48 hours following the test. You may also note a small amount of blood in the urine. You may resume your usual daily activities immediately following the RUG test.

Please call your physician if you develop increasing burning, foul smelling urine, fevers, or chills within 24 hours of the procedure.

Contact Information

Following the test, if you develop any signs of urinary infection such as fever of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, chills, persistent burning with urination, persistent blood in the urine, difficulty urinating, or if you have any questions, please contact the University of Michigan, Department of Urology at 734-936-7030 during business hours (8:00 am – 5:00 pm). If there are any concerns that need to be addressed after business hours and on weekends, please call 734-936-6267 and ask to speak with the Urology Resident on call. If you need to see a doctor right away please go to the nearest Emergency Room (ER). Have the ER doctor contact the University of Michigan urology resident on call for assistance.

Disclaimer: This document is for informational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Talk with your doctor if you have Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options.

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