Non-Invasive Vascular Laboratory

WHY I AM HAVING THIS TEST: REASONS, EXPLANATIONS & TESTING

PREPARATIONS

Why Am I Having A Non-Invasive Vascular Exam?

A Non-Invasive Vascular Examination, often called a Vascular Ultrasound, gives your cardiovascular specialist a great deal of diagnostic information about your arteries or veins without the use of dyes or radiation. Doppler ultrasound is used to evaluate blood flow in your legs and can be helpful in identifying blockages in your arteries and clots in your veins. Vascular ultrasound also gives your cardiovascular interventionalist diagnostic information regarding previous interventions such as stenting, or opening of an artery/vein by balloon (angioplasty). Some of the most common sites where Doppler ultrasound is used are in the neck, abdomen, legs, arms, and heart.

All of your Non-Invasive Examinations and Physiologic Vascular procedures at First Coast Cardiovascular Institute will be performed at one of our four fully Accredited, Signature, Non-Invasive Vascular Labs.

Will it hurt? Are there any special preparations for the exam?

There is generally no pain involved in an ultrasound examination, and for most exams, no preparation is necessary. Your doctor may ask you to refrain from eating on the morning of your exam if the ultrasound scan involves your abdomen. A gel will be applied to your skin and an instrument, called a transducer, is then placed on the area to be examined. This gel can feel cool and even though it wipes off easily, it is a good idea to wear clothing that is easily washable.

What can I expect during the exam?

The images made by the returning echoes are displayed on one or more monitors, which look like small television screens. In addition, returning sound waves that have been reflected by moving blood can be heard by means of speakers in the instrument. The sounds could be compared to the sound of wind
blowing through the trees. The room is usually darkened during the examination to make it easier for the vascular technologist and doctor to see the images on the monitor.

**How long will the exam take?**

The average Doppler ultrasound exam takes 30 to 60 minutes. The length of the exam depends on numerous factors, including the portion of your body to be examined and the complexity of the anatomy.

**Who will perform the exam?**

All Non-Invasive Vascular examinations performed at First Coast Cardiovascular Institute are by registered and competent vascular technologists/sonographers, in fully Accredited, State of the Art Vascular Labs. These technologists are highly trained specialists whose only focus is vascular disease, corresponding risk factors, and interventional surveillance. Post testing, one of First Coast Cardiovascular Institute's highly trained and Board Certified Vascular Interventionalists will interpret the examination results within 24 hours of testing, or immediately if warranted.

**Will I need more than one exam?**

In many cases, follow-up exams are necessary to evaluate the progress of your condition or your response to interventions or therapies. These will vary depending on your doctors' recommendation but generally fall within every month, six months, or annually. Once again, these are basic time frames, and only your doctor can give you more specific, tailored medical plans.