

Information for patients having a carotid duplex

Your consultant has decided that he/she would like you to have a carotid duplex.

What is it?

A carotid duplex is a scan that uses ultrasound (sound waves) to produce mapping of the arteries to your brain (carotid arteries) in your neck.

Why do I need it?

The test gives the doctor information about the presence of atheroma (hardening of the arteries) within your carotid arteries.

How is it done?

You will be taken into the scanning room by a member of the vascular laboratory team who will be performing your scan. You will be asked to remove any clothing which prevents access to your neck and lie on a couch on your back. An ultrasound probe and a small amount of gel are gently placed on your neck and you will be asked to move your head in different positions. Please do not be afraid to tell the operator if you feel any discomfort from the probe pressing on your neck.

During the scan you will hear sounds coming from the machine, which represent blood flow through the carotid arteries. The probe will collect pictures from your arteries and these are shown on the ultrasound machine and interpreted by the vascular laboratory team. The scan will take approximately 15–20 minutes.

What happens at the end of the scan?

Once the scan is complete, you can get dressed and take a seat in the waiting area. A member of the vascular laboratory team will write a report for the doctor, who will then discuss the results with you. Please feel free to bring someone with you during your procedure. Please ask upon arrival if you would like someone from the hospital to be with you.

Please note that as this is a teaching hospital, occasionally a student may observe this appointment or undertake the test under supervision. If you do not wish a student to be present please let us know.

VASCULAR LABORATORY – Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2GW Tel: 0121 371 5482