

# Information About Your Child's Procedure

---

## Arthrogram

Read this form so you understand the procedure and its risks. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand.

### What is an arthrogram?

An arthrogram is used to diagnose a problem or relieve pain in a joint, most commonly the shoulder, hip, knee, elbow or wrist.

### How is an arthrogram performed?

With live X-ray (fluoroscopy) for guidance, a doctor will numb the skin around the joint, then place a small needle into the joint and inject a small amount of X-ray dye to confirm that the needle is in the proper place. Then one of two things will happen.

- If the arthrogram is for diagnosis, the doctor will inject another dye, for MRI. The needle will be removed and a bandage applied. We will take your child to an MRI machine to scan the joint. Using the MRI images, a doctor will evaluate the joint and the tissue, ligaments and cartilage around it and attempt to determine the cause of pain, swelling or abnormal movement.
- If the arthrogram is for pain relief, the doctor will inject pain-relief medicine. The needle will be removed and a bandage applied.

Your child will be protected by an X-ray shield during the procedure.



The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia®

INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY

## Will my child be awake during the procedure?

Some children remain awake, and we use a local numbing medicine at the site of the injection. In other cases, the child will be asleep; we use IV sedation or general anesthesia.

## Will my child feel any pain?

Your child will feel a needle prick when we inject the local numbing medicine. After the procedure, some patients experience mild discomfort, or a fullness or tightness, in the joint for several days. If your child has pain, apply a cool compress to the area or use over-the-counter pain medication.

## How long does the procedure take?

Less than one hour.

## What risks are associated with this procedure?

An arthrogram is considered low-risk. However, potential complications include:

- bleeding
- infection
- injury to surrounding structures (such as veins)
- increased risk of joint dislocation after the procedure (because of the extra fluid in the joint)
- nerve damage

## When can I remove the bandage?

Leave the bandage in place for one day. After the bandage is removed, your child may shower or take a bath.

## Are there any activity restrictions?

Your child should rest the joint for 24 hours and may not participate in strenuous activity for one week. There is an increased risk of joint dislocation for one week, so avoid activities that directly stress the joint. For instance, a child who

had an arthrogram of the shoulder shouldn't do pull-ups or play on the monkey bars, while a child who had an arthrogram of the hip should avoid hard running and jumping.

**CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY IF YOUR CHILD EXPERIENCES ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- fever higher than 101° Fahrenheit
- increased swelling or redness of the joint
- joint still swollen after three to five days

Call Interventional Radiology between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 215-590-7000. At the first prompt push 1, and at the second prompt push 2.

At all other times, call 215-590-1000 and ask to speak to the interventional radiologist on call.

The Interventional Radiology team is here to help you and your child. Please ask us if you have any questions or if anything is not clear.

**Thank you!**

---

*An arthrogram is used to diagnose a problem or relieve pain in a joint, most commonly the shoulder, hip, knee, elbow or wrist.*

 The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia®  
Hope lives here.®

34th Street and Civic Center Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19104-4399  
1-800 TRY CHOP [www.chop.edu](http://www.chop.edu)

Founded in 1855, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia is the birthplace of pediatric medicine in America. Throughout its history, a passionate spirit of innovation has driven this renowned institution to pursue scientific discovery, establish the highest standards of patient care, train future leaders in pediatrics, and advocate for children's health. A haven of hope for children and families worldwide, CHOP is a nonprofit charitable organization that relies on the generous support of its donors to continue to set the global standard for pediatric care.

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Hope lives here and the  logo are registered marks of The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Keep the connection.

