

Angioplasty

What is an angioplasty?

An angioplasty is a procedure that widens a blood vessel, fistula or graft that has been narrowed by thickening of the vessel wall or a clot. Thickening causes slow blood flow through your access and may lead to a narrow area or block in the blood vessel, fistula or graft.

Why do I need an angioplasty?

Your angiogram test showed that you have a narrowing in your blood vessel, fistula or graft. An angioplasty opens up the blood vessel, fistula or graft and improves the blood flow.

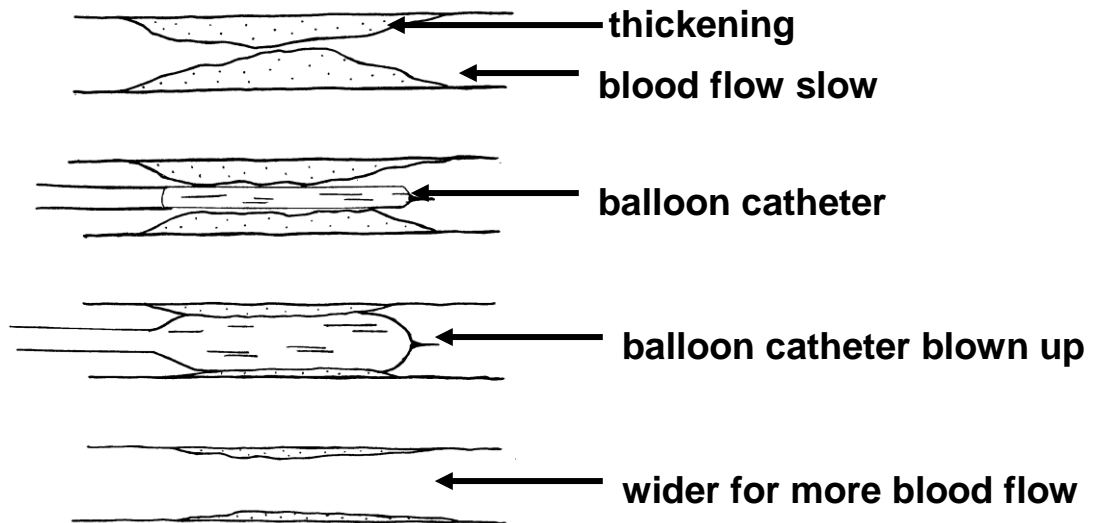
Before the angioplasty:

- **If you have an allergy to contrast dye, contact your primary care nurse or nephrologist before the procedure.**
- If you are taking any blood thinning medication such as coumadin or warfarin, talk to your doctor about stopping this medication. You will need to have a blood test before the procedure.
- If you need a translator or help, bring this person with you.
- Arrange in advance to have an adult take you home after this procedure.
- On the day of the procedure, report to the Angio Interventional Suites Reception Area at St. Joseph's Hospital ½ hour before your appointment time.
- Before the procedure, the radiologist explains the procedure to you and you sign a consent form.
- You are then helped to lie flat on the x-ray table.
- You are awake during the procedure. Staff is always with you.

Turn over →

During the angioplasty:

- You may be given medication to relax you. The doctor puts local freezing into the skin around the blood vessel, fistula or graft.
- The doctor then guides a long, thin tube with a balloon on the end into the blood vessel, fistula or graft by watching the monitor.
- You may be given a small amount of blood thinner medication during the procedure.
- The balloon is blown up to press on the narrow section and widen it.



- The balloon stays blown up for 30 to 60 seconds then the air is let out. The doctor may do this a few times to widen the narrow part.
- You may feel some pain or discomfort in your arm when the balloon is blown up.
- When the procedure is over, the air is let out of the balloon and the tube is taken out.

After the angioplasty:

- An adult must take you home.
- Your doctor or primary care nurse will tell you when to start taking your blood thinner medication again.
- You may have some bruising. This will go away over time.

Follow-up:

- If you **are not** a hemodialysis patient, you will be seen in the Vascular Access Clinic within 1 month.
- If you **are** a hemodialysis patient, your nephrologist, primary care nurse or vascular access nurse will talk to you about your results at your next visit.