

CAROTID DUPLEX INFORMATION SHEET

What is a carotid duplex and why do I need one?

A Carotid Duplex ultrasound scan, sometimes known as a carotid doppler, is an ultrasound scan of the neck arteries that carry oxygen-rich blood to the head, brain and face. You have a set of arteries, called the carotid arteries, on each side of your neck so the vascular scientist will scan you from both sides of the neck.

It is a pain-less, non-invasive examination, similar to pregnancy scans, and is one of the most widely requested cardio-vascular examinations for both patients with pre-stroke symptoms and patients with no symptoms but risk factors associated with atherosclerosis (the build up of plaque on the walls of arteries).

It gives useful information on whether there are any fatty deposits (plaques) on the walls of your arteries in the neck and if so the extent and degree of narrowing caused by the plaques. It also allows the vascular scientist to measure how thick the inner two linings of the walls are (the intima-medial lining) which can be an indicator of early changes of atherosclerosis.

How is the Carotid Duplex performed?

- You will need to undress to the waist (you can leave on a singlet, petticoat or bra) allowing easy access to the neck, and remove any neck jewellery.
- A probe as well as lubricating gel is placed on your neck. The gel is hypo-allergenic, and is primarily a slightly saline gel allowing easy movement of the sound waves into the body.
The right side of the neck is examined first followed by the left.
- High frequency sound waves pass through the skin. The probe picks up returning sound waves reflected from tissue and moving blood corpuscles and displays them as a duplex ultrasound image, a real-time, highly detailed display of the carotid arteries, their walls, the blood flow through them and the tissue surrounding the arteries.
- The examination takes about 20-30 minutes

Do I need to prepare for this examination?

You do not need any special preparation for this examination. You can eat and drink normally before and after the examination. Continue to take your usual medication.

Is a Carotid Duplex a safe examination?

Carotid Duplex ultrasound is extremely safe. There are no known risks from the clinical use of ultrasound for this examination.

The 66 Harley Street Investigation team will be happy to help with any concerns on the following number 0207 4364568

The personnel involved in these examinations will be one of the following highly experienced and qualified Vascular Scientists;

Kate Sommerville
Elaine Young
Nicola Milburn
Victoria Bautista