

*A venous
duplex scan
helps to detect
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Venous Duplex Scan

A venous duplex scan uses sound waves to check how well the veins are returning blood to the heart. This vascular ultrasound exam can focus on the larger veins in either the upper or lower portion of the body.

- *Upper extremity scan* looks at the veins in your neck and the area from your shoulder to your elbow. Both arms are examined.
- *Lower extremity scan* looks at the veins anywhere from your groin to your ankle. Both legs are examined.

The test helps to detect a blockage in blood flow (such as a blood clot) that may cause pain or swelling in the arms or legs.

A venous duplex scan is performed in the Vascular Lab and takes about 45 minutes.

Before the test

There is no special preparation for this test.

On the day of the exam, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- Your physician's written order for the test, if one was given to you
- A list of allergies
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter and herbals)
- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information and card
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

For their own safety, children under 16 may not visit in the testing area. They may stay in the waiting room with a responsible adult.

Please come to the Galter Pavilion, 201 East Huron Street, and check in at the 8th floor reception desk. Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions.

For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions, and on the 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24-hour desk near the Superior Street entrance).

During the test

The technician (tech) will help you lie on your back on an exam table. A warm gel will be applied to the skin in the area to be examined. Then the tech will move a small, handheld device (transducer) on the skin over the veins being examined. The transducer will transmit sound waves to a monitor, where images can be seen and saved for later review. During the test, you may be asked to take deep breaths. You may see the images on the monitor and hear some sounds as the tech records the blood flow.

After the test

The tech will provide towels to help remove the gel. If a blood clot is found, your physician will be notified right away, and you will be advised of any needed follow-up care.

If no clot is noted, you will be free to leave. You may resume your normal diet and activities.

Most often, initial findings are sent to your physician within 48 hours. A full report will follow in about 5 business days.

If you have questions about this test, please call the Vascular Lab at 312.926.5809.

Northwestern Medicine – Health Information Resources

For more information, contact Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Alberto Culver Health Learning Center (HLC) at hlc@nm.org, or by calling 312.926.5465. Health information professionals can help you find the information you need and provide you with personal support at no charge.

For more information about Northwestern Medicine, please visit our website at nm.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar al Departamento de Representantes para Pacientes al 312.926.3112.

The entities that come together as Northwestern Medicine are committed to representing the communities we serve, fostering a culture of inclusion, delivering culturally competent care, providing access to treatment and programs in a nondiscriminatory manner and eliminating healthcare disparities. For questions, please call either Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Patient Representatives Department at 312.926.3112, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363 or the Northwestern Medical Group Patient Representatives Department at 312.695.1100, TDD/TTY 312.926.6363.

Developed by: NMH Vascular Laboratory