FAQs ABOUT INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY

What is interventional radiology?
Interventional radiology (sometimes shortened to IR, or VIR for vascular and interventional radiology, and also called surgical radiology) is done to find and treat health problems in nearly every organ system in your body. It is a type of radiology that is minimally invasive. This means that only small cuts are made, unlike the large cuts made in regular surgery. The idea behind IR is to diagnose and treat you using the least invasive way possible so that you have lower risk and less physical stress than surgery.

Using x-rays, CT, ultrasound, MRI, and other types of imaging, interventional radiologists get images that are then used to lead interventional tools, such as needles and thin tubes called catheters, throughout the body.

Many health problems that once needed surgery can now be treated without surgery by interventional radiologists. By lowering the physical trauma to the patient, IR can lower chances of infection and the time it takes you to recover. IR can also help to shorten hospital stays.

Are there any special instructions I need to follow before my procedure?
For most of the procedures performed by IR, you will be not be allowed to eat for several hours before your procedure. The day before your procedure, you may be contacted by a nurse or staff member from the Interventional Radiology department who will talk to you about your procedure, tell you when you need to arrive, give you directions to the reception area or nursing floor, and review specific instructions needed for your procedure.

What happens before the procedure?
You will be taken to the IR patient prep area. You will be asked to change into a gown and will then be checked by a nurse. At this time, a nurse may place an IV line in your arm so you can be given sedation and fluids (if your procedure needs this).

When will I speak with a doctor?
Shortly after you see the nurse, you will meet with one of the IR doctors who will go over your procedure with you and answer any questions you may have. The doctor will ask you to sign some papers saying that you agree to have your procedure performed.
FAQs ABOUT INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY CONTINUED

How long will my procedure take?
IR procedures can last from 45 minutes to many hours, depending on your procedure.

What will happen after my procedure?
At the end of your procedure, you will be taken from the procedure room back to the patient holding area to recover. Depending on the procedure that was performed and how you are feeling, you may be able to leave within the hour, but sometimes it takes several hours until you are able to leave. Some procedures call for an overnight stay. The doctor will talk about this with you before your procedure.