



## **PENILE BLOOD FLOW STUDY**

A normal erection requires an increase in blood flow going into the penis through arteries and a decrease in blood flow leaving the penis through veins. Problems with inflow and outflow of these arteries and veins are the most common cause of impotence. The penile blood flow study is performed in order to determine whether there is a vascular cause of impotence.

An erection is normally stimulated by the nerves which conduct messages from the brain. However, it is rare for a man to become sexually stimulated in a doctor's office. Therefore, medications are used to stimulate normal nerve stimulation and produce a "non-sexual" erection in the office. Unfortunately, medications in pill form do not work. Instead, you will receive an injection of medicine into the side of the shaft of your penis. An incredibly small needle is used for this injection which does not hurt. However, some men do experience a burning sensation inside the penis from the medication.

The injection stimulates an increase in blood flow through the arteries and produces an erection in most men. This erection may last for 10 minutes or several hours. You will not be allowed to leave the office with an erection on this visit. A prolonged erection, longer than 3 hours, can damage the penis. If the erection does not subside in a reasonable amount of time, you will receive an antidote to make the erection go away.

Duplex ultrasound is used to look inside the penis and measure the blood flow in the arteries and veins. This equipment is painless and does not use any radiation. It is similar to the sonar which is used by fisherman and the Navy. Ultrasound is very safe and is even used to examine babies in a mother's womb.

This diagnostic test has been performed upon more than 600 men at this hospital and thousands of men nationwide. There are no serious side-effects of this test other than a prolonged erection. If you should experience a prolonged erection, greater than 3 hours, after this test, call Dr. Dominick Carbone immediately at 336-716-4131. Do not wait until the next day.