

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Cardiac Cath**
- **Medication Safety**
- **Ranch Dressing**
- **New Cholesterol Drug**

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## What is a Cardiac Catheterization?

What is a cardiac catheterization? A cardiac catheterization, also known as a heart cath or an angiogram, is a procedure done primarily to evaluate the arteries of the heart to see if there is blockage present. However, a cardiac catheterization can also give more information on the heart's valves, the heart's muscle, and the heart's pressures. This information is very important and helps define a treatment plan. So how is the procedure done? A cardiac catheterization takes place in a catheterization laboratory (cath lab for short) which is usually at a hospital. This can be in an inpatient or outpatient setting. The procedure is done by a



cardiologist with the help of the cath lab team. In preparation for the procedure, an IV will be started and some medication that helps relax will be given. The catheterization site, usually the groin or wrist, will be shaved if needed, and prepped. After a numbing agent is given a small tube is inserted into the blood vessel. Then a catheter is inserted through the tube into the blood vessel that goes to the heart. Then a contrast or dye is injected into the arteries of the heart.

The catheter and the arteries may be seen on a big screen during the procedure. If a blockage can be fixed with a balloon (angioplasty) or a stent, in many cases this is done during the procedure. Sometimes stents have to be placed in different stages though, especially if the kidney function is not normal. Once all the information is gathered that is needed, the catheter and sheath will be removed. Pressure will be held at the site to prevent bleeding. Sometimes a closure device will be used to aid in early ambulation and to minimize the need for bed rest. What are the risks of the procedure? Overall the risk of major complications is very low and totals less than two percent. The most common complication is bleeding at the catheter site. This can usually be managed with holding pressure. To be continued...page 3 (1,4).

### Tip of the Month

**Medication Safety:**

1. Bring your Medications that you are taking in to every office or hospital visit.
2. Keep an UP TO DATE medication list.
3. Know why you are taking each medication.
4. Try to use the same pharmacy so they can alert you of any potential interactions.
5. Know how to take your medication.
6. Dispose of old medications once they are expired or when you know that you will no longer be taking it.



# Ranch Dressing



Recipe from  
"Breaking the Salt  
Habit" by Erik  
Williams.

## Ingredients:

- 1\2 cup Skim Milk
- 1\2 Tb Lemon Juice
- 1\2 cup Light Mayonnaise
- 1\2 cup Light Sour Cream
- 1\2 tsp. Vegetable Oil
- 1\2 tsp Garlic Powder
- 1 tsp. Dried Chives
- 1\2 tsp. Dried Parsley
- 1\2 tsp. Dill Weed
- 1\2 tsp. Onion Powder
- A pinch of Black Pepper

## Directions:

- Combine the milk and lemon juice in a small bowl and let stand for 10 minutes.
- In another bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients and add milk/lemon juice to mixture.
- Refrigerate to store.

## Nutrition Info

Yields 12 servings  
1 Serving = 1 Tb.

Calories: 43  
Total Fat: 4 g  
Sat Fat: 1g  
Cholesterol: 2  
Potassium: 22 mg  
Carbohydrates: 2 g  
Protein: <1 g  
Fiber: 0 g  
Sugar: <1g  
Sodium: 51 mg

**Quote of the Month:** "A goal is a dream with a deadline" Napoleon Hill.

## Did you Know?

Did you know that on July 25, 2015 the FDA approved a new cholesterol medication? The name of the new drug is Praluent (alirocumab). It is the first drug of its kind to be on the market and is unlike the available drugs. However it is to be used in conjunction with diet and the highest tolerated dose of a statin drug. It is approved to help lower cholesterol in individuals with an inherited condition called Heterozygous Familial Hypercholesterolemia. It can also be used in people who have heart disease who need further lowering of their cholesterol. Praluent works by blocking a certain protein called PCSK9. This action allows for more receptors to be available on the liver to remove the bad cholesterol (LDL) in the blood. (2,3).

Some studies have already been completed but more studies are needed to see if this medication actually can reduce the incidence of heart attack or stroke. So far the studies have shown that it can significantly lower the bad (LDL) cholesterol by 36-59 percent. It is important to know that this medication is an injection that needs to be given every two weeks. The most common side effects include irritation around the injection site itself. However systemic side effects such as the flu, cold like symptoms, and allergic reactions have been reported. It is important to remember that the class of statin drugs have been well established in the treatment and prevention heart disease. But for some individuals who have very high cholesterol levels and or who have been intolerant to statins, this may be an option in the future. (2,3).



Other complications that can occur include bleeding, heart attack, stroke, abnormal heart rhythm, allergic reaction to the contrast, damage to the artery, and in rare cases, death.

After the procedure, if there was not an intervention such as a stent, then most individuals can go home the same day. If an intervention was completed, then an overnight stay in the hospital is usually required. Once home, most individuals can return to their normal activities. There may be some mild restrictions such as no heavy lifting for 5-7 days. Some bruising and tenderness may be present but if there is any significant pain, swelling, or drainage at the catheter site then notify the cardiologist. If there is any significant bleeding that cannot be stopped, call 911. Make sure to review the written instructions and any medication changes that are sent home.

In summary, a cardiac catheterization is an excellent but invasive diagnostic procedure. While it does carry some risk, it is extremely helpful in the diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease. (1,4).

