Intravenous Pyelogram (IVP)

What is an Intravenous Pyelogram?
An Intravenous Pyelogram (IVP) is an x-ray of the urinary system, which includes your kidneys, urethra and bladder. A contrast material (sometimes called "x-ray dye") is used to enhance the image of the x-ray. Images are captured moment by moment as the contrast moves through your veins and urinary system. A delay in movement could indicate an obstruction.

Why is it done?
An IVP is used to diagnose infections, kidney stones, lower back or side pain and other issues.

Patient preparation
Your health care provider will provide you with detailed instructions prior to your IVP. You will likely be given instructions to eat a light lunch and dinner with no food after midnight. You may be instructed to take a laxative the night before your IVP to ensure a better view of the kidneys. Make sure to let your health care provider know if you pregnant or allergic to any medication, food or contrast material (x-ray dye).

What to expect
You will be asked to change into a gown and remove jewelry. You will lie on the x-ray table for an initial x-ray before the contrast material is injected into your system. Using a small IV, placed in your arm, the technologist will inject the contrast material into your body. This contrast material will travel to the kidneys and eventually be excreted. During your IVP, a series of x-rays will be taken to reveal the outline of the kidneys and demonstrate their inner "collecting system." X-rays will also be taken as the contrast material travels down the ureters and into the bladder. The IVP should take about an hour to complete. You will be asked to drink plenty of fluids for the rest of the day to help flush out any remaining contrast material in your system.

Report
After your IVP is completed, a radiologist will read your images and send the results to your health care provider. After reviewing the results, your provider will discuss them with you and go over next steps.