

Having a CT (Computerised Tomography) Examination

Introduction

This leaflet tells you about having a CT scan. It explains what is involved and what the possible risks are.

A Radiographer will perform your scan and it will then be interpreted by a specially trained doctor called a Radiologist.

What is a CT scan?

CT stands for computerised tomography. A CT scanner uses X-rays to produce a series of cross sectional images which are obtained through the body and a computer is used to reconstruct the images. This information may help your consultant with diagnosis and planning of your treatment.

Who will be present for the scan?

Radiographers and radiographic assistants will be present in the room to prepare you for the scan, they will introduce themselves at the start of the procedure.

Occasionally student radiographers may be present to observe the scan.

Is there any preparation needed before my scan?

For abdominal scans it may be necessary to drink water or an oral contrast before you arrive in the department full instructions will be given in your appointment letter. **You do not need a full bladder.**

What happens during the scan?

- You may be asked to change into a gown by a member of staff depending on which part of the body is to be examined.
- You will then be taken into the CT room and positioned into the scanner. The area to be scanned will be positioned within the machine.
- We will make you comfortable and answer any queries you may have. The scan will then be taken.
- The scan may need an injection into a vein in your arm of a contrast dye or substance that improves the picture.
- The radiographer will leave the room during the scan, but will be able to talk to you through an intercom.

Will it hurt?

A CT scan is a painless procedure.

How long will it take?

The length of the examination will vary depending on which area is being looked at. The actual scan is normally completed in a few minutes. You can expect to be in the Medical Imaging Department for up to one hour. Many examinations are however completed sooner than this.

What happens after the scan? Finally

You should feel well enough to go home or back to work after the examination. A Radiologist will report on the scan images.

If your scan involves an injection of a contrast agent it is recommended that you do not drive or use tools or machines for 1 hour after the injection.

Are there any risks or complications?

Usually pregnant women should not have a CT scan, as there is a small risk that x-rays may cause an abnormality to the unborn child. Be sure to tell your doctor or the radiographer if you think there is a chance you may be pregnant. If you have been booked for an abdominal or pelvic CT and this appointment does not fall within 10 days of the start of your last period please contact the department prior to attending.

The contrast dye used in CT scans contains iodine. Prior to IV contrast being given you will be asked if you have any known allergies or kidney problems.

If you find reading this leaflet difficult or you do not understand what it means for you, please call **01392 402336, selecting option 1, then option 4** and we can talk it through.

Contact us

If you have any queries or concerns you can contact us on **01392 402336**.

How to get to the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital at Wonford

Please refer to the enclosed "Welcome to the Medical Imaging Department" leaflet or use the Trusts website for the latest information:

www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/patients/where

For more information on the Medical Imaging Department, please visit our website:

www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/patients/services/medical-imaging

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