

CT SCAN

WHAT IS CT?

CT stands for 'computed tomography'. It uses a special X-ray machine which produces cross-sectional images (slices) of the inside of your body.

WHO WILL I SEE?

The staff of the Radiology Department will look after you during your visit and a radiologist will take your CT.

IS IT SAFE?

The radiation dose will vary depending on the type of CT scan you are having. Standard x-rays use a small amount of radiation that has a very low associated risk.

Please inform the Radiology Department if you are pregnant or think you might be, or if you have had a similar CT within the last six months.

DO I NEED AN INJECTION?

For most scans, an injection is required to increase the amount of information that can be obtained. This depends on the type of scan your consultant has requested. The injection will usually give you a warm feeling around your body and a metal taste in your mouth. There is a very small risk you may have a reaction to the contrast used, such as a skin rash or nausea. We have qualified medical staff in the department who are trained to deal with this.

BEFORE THE SCAN

When we book your appointment, we will give you full instructions, but please follow these simple instructions:

- Do not eat or drink prior to your appointment if you've been told not to
- Inform us if you are diabetic and taking Metformin
- Inform us if you have an allergies or asthma

- Inform us if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or think you may be pregnant
- Continue taking any medication unless instructed otherwise
- Contact us 24 hours prior to your appointment to confirm your attendance.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

ON THE DAY OF YOUR SCAN

Please report to the reception desk, after which you will be shown where to wait until collected by a radiographer or another member of staff.

You may be asked to complete a safety questionnaire. The procedure for your examination will be explained to you. You may be asked to drink water or a special drink before your scan.

If you need to undress for your CT scan, private changing rooms and lockers are provided.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING MY APPOINTMENT?

In the CT room, you will be asked to lie on the scanner bed. The radiographer will position you and then go into the Control Room to start your scan.

During the scan, please keep still and you may be given breath hold instructions to follow.

The radiographer will be able to see and hear you at all times.

WILL IT BE UNCOMFORTABLE?

If you need an injection, this may cause you some discomfort. The scan itself will be painless, although you may be uncomfortable from having to lie still.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

If you are given fluid to drink for your scan, you may have to wait 30 minutes to an hour before entering the scanning room. The scanning process will usually take between 15 and 30 minutes. If you have had a contrast injection, we would also recommend that you wait in the department for 30 minutes after your scan to ensure you do not have a delayed reaction to the injection.

AFTER THE CT SCAN

After your CT you will feel no ill effects. You may drive and return to work.

ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

If you require an injection for your scan, there is a very small risk you may have a reaction to the contrast used, such as a skin rash or nausea.

WHEN WILL I GET THE RESULTS?

The images will be checked by a radiologist after you visit and a report sent to your referring doctor normally within 24 hours.

CAN I BRING A RELATIVE OR FRIEND?

Yes, but for reasons of safety, they will not be able to accompany you into the examination room, except in very special circumstances. If you are bringing children with you, they will not be allowed into the CT room and you will need to make arrangements for their care.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have any further questions, please contact the Radiology Department on 020 7935 7700 and a member of the team will be happy to help you.

Please let us know about any special needs you have (e.g. wheelchair access, if you are hard of hearing, have poor eyesight or if you are claustrophobic).