

The Computerised Tomography (CT) Department
Division of Imaging
Clinical and Scientific Services

Information for Patients

Bowel Preparation for CT Colonogram – Picolax

Please read all of this leaflet. It contains important information about how you should prepare for your examination.

The date and time of your appointment are shown in your letter.

A CT Colonogram is a CT scan examination of your bowel using X-Rays. It is difficult to see the bowel normally but by cleansing and inflating the bowel it can then be demonstrated using the specialist computer software. The examination will be carried out by a Male or Female Radiographer who specialises in CT scans of the bowel.

Preparation for a CT scan

We will require your bowel to be empty for this examination. We will have given you two bowel cleansing agent to take the day before your procedure.

Although it may be a lot to drink, please try to finish it as it will help us diagnose your problem. It might give you a little diarrhoea, but this is nothing to worry about.

Instructions for bowel preparation to be followed the day before your examination.

You will have either attended or had a telephone pre-assessment clinic appointment to assess your suitability for this CT Colonogram bowel examination. However, if your condition has changed or your health has deteriorated between this assessment and the bowel test it is essential that you contact the Radiology Department.

For this examination to be successful it is important that your bowel should be empty, therefore you must follow these instructions very carefully.

Please follow these instructions as failure to do so will affect the quality of your scan.

At 7.45 am the day before your appointment

Mix the contents of one sachet of the laxative provided (sodium picosulfate) into a measuring jug with 150ml or 5fl oz of cold water. Stir thoroughly for 2-3 minutes and allow to dissolve. This mixture will heat up. Cool for approximately 5 minutes before drinking.

At 08.00 am, mix 10mls of gastrografin with 150mls of water and drink

Between 08.00 am and 09.00 am.

For breakfast you can have the following:

- A boiled or poached egg and/or
- White bread with a scraping of butter or margarin. No jam or marmalade.

Important: **Do not eat any other food.**

You should now go onto a clear liquid diet.

This includes things like tea and coffee without milk, clear soups, Bovril, Oxo, clear jelly, honey in water and sugary drinks especially if you are feeling weak. You can also have ice lollies and boiled sweets.

Please drinks as much of the clear liquids as you need to stop you feeling thirsty.

At 2.00 pm, take the second sachet of laxative (sodium picosulfate) in exactly the same way as the first.

Mix 10mls of gastrografin with 150mls of water and drink.

At 8.00 pm, mix 10mls of gastrografin with 150mls of water and drink.

At 7.00 am on the morning of your scan, mix 10mls of gastrografin with 150mls of water and drink.

If you have an afternoon appointment:

Please follow the instruction for the morning appointment but take the fourth dose of gastrografin at 11.00 am on the morning of your appointment.

Please note:

This laxative is very effective. Be prepared for your bowels to open one hour after the first dose, and then for several times during the day. For your own comfort stay within easy reach of the toilet throughout the day.

Remember the laxative will cause diarrhoea. A little petroleum jelly around the back passage will help prevent soreness. If you experience any other unexpected ill effects please ring the department.

Medication:

Regular oral medication should be continued as normal but taken at least one hour before administration of the bowel cleansing agents.

Important information:

Iron tablets, bran or Isogel should be stopped seven days prior to the test.

If you are using the contraceptive pill you need to take additional precautions for up to 7 days after taking bowel cleansing agents.

Is there anything I need to inform you of before I attend for my appointment?

Pregnancy:

Radiation can be harmful for an unborn baby. If you are or think you may be pregnant you must tell the radiographer before the examination.

For some examinations the radiographer may check your pregnancy status with you before the examination.

Each examination request will be checked by the radiographer / radiologist to make sure it is properly justified and necessary.

It is often the first point of investigation to help the doctor decide if any other forms of imaging or tests are needed.

How do I prepare for my examination?

Timing:

You should plan to be in the department for up to 1-2 hours. Your appointment letter will give you more details.

We will try to keep your appointment time, but occasionally we have to see patients urgently at short notice. This means that your appointment could be delayed. We will let you know if this is the case.

Clothes and accessories:

There are some clothes that can affect the quality of the x-ray and you may be asked to remove them and wear a hospital gown.

If you do not wish to change into a hospital gown then please do not wear clothing with zips, metal, buttons on that are made from thick material.

You may also be asked to remove jewellery, dentures, glasses and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the x-ray images.

Help and support in the department

If you have any medical problem which you feel may affect your safety in the department, or if you feel you may need any assistance, please let us know when you arrive.

What happens during the examination?

- A trained specialist called a radiographer will perform your CT Colonogram
- The examination usually takes about 30mins.
- When you arrive in the x-ray department, we will ask you to change into a hospital gown.
- The person completing the procedure will ask you to confirm some details including date of birth and pregnancy status.
- We will ask you to lie on the x-ray table. A small thin tube will then be inserted into the back passage (rectum) and carbon dioxide will then be fed into your bowel. We will ask you to move into different positions on the table to allow the x-rays to be taken.

During your examination you may feel uncomfortable, but it should not be painful. To help demonstrate all the bowel an x-ray dye may be given through a small injection/cannula in your arm, additionally you may be given a muscle relaxant to help relieve any discomfort.

The muscle relaxant may make your eyesight blurred for a short time. It is important that you do not drive until at least 30minutes after your examination to ensure your vision has returned to normal.

Do I need to give my permission (consent)?

- The radiographer will ask you if you are happy for the examination to go ahead. This is called verbal consent and might only involve the radiographer checking you are booked for the correct examination.
- If you do not wish to have the examination or are undecided, please ask the radiographer so that they can answer any questions you may have.
- Remember, it is your decision. You can change your mind at any time and your wishes will be respected.
- However, not having the examination may delay your diagnosis as the referring clinician may not have all the needed information.

Are there any risks with this examination?

Radiation risk

The use of x-rays may mean that there is a slight increase in the chance of cancer occurring many years after your examination, e.g. 1 in 10,000 for a CT head scan, 1 in 1,000 for a CT abdomen scan.

Although this examination involves the use of x-rays, your doctor will have decided that the benefit of having the scan far outweighs any risks.

The dose is equal to the natural radiation we all received from our surrounding over a period of 1-5 years.

It is also worth noting that these risk levels only represent very small additions to the 1 in 3 chance we all have of getting cancer.

Risk of Bowel Perforation:

Damage to the bowel wall (a small tear in the lining of the colon or rectum may occur rarely, in fewer than 1 in 3000 tests)

Possible common side effects of Gastrografin: Headache, Nausea, Proctalgia, Vomiting, Diarrhoea, Hypotension, Electrolyte imbalance.

Possible common side effects to Buscopan:

Visual disturbance, Tachycardia, Dizziness, Dry mouth

Contrast risk

We might need to give you contrast dye to make areas of your body show up more clearly.

One of the radiology staff will give you this using a small needle inserted into a vein in your arm or the back of your hand.

The radiographers will complete a checklist to ensure it is safe for you to have the dye and you will be asked to sign this form as a consent, the specific side effects are documented on the checklists that you complete.

The contrast dye that is sometimes used can cause allergic reactions however the staff available will be checking for any risks before we proceed.

Risk of X-Ray Contrast Extravasation:

In less than 1% of injections, the injection may leak out of the vein into the surrounding skin causing swelling and a bruise. Rarely this can progress to form an ulcer. Possible side effects to contrast: Nausea, Vomiting, Pruritus (itchy rash)

What happens after a CT colonogram?

The radiographer may ask you to wait in the department while they check that no more images are needed.

As soon as the radiographer is satisfied that no more x-rays are needed, you will be free to leave the department.

If you have had a contrast dye injection, we may ask for you to wait for 10 minutes before you leave the department. This is to make sure that you are feeling ok and there is no sign of any allergic reaction to the dye you have been given.

You can eat and drink as normal and get back to your usual activities straight after the scan.

You will be given an aftercare leaflet which will explain what to do after the test and how you will receive your results.

What should I do if I have a problem?

You should not have any problems that is a result of the CT colonogram.

If you feel your condition has changed, or you need further medical advice before receiving your results, please make an appointment with the doctor that referred you, or in an emergency, go to your nearest Emergency Department (ED).

How can I provide feedback for the appointment I have attended today?

The Division of Imaging welcomes feedback from all our patients. We actively take part in the Friends and Family Test and we complete a patient experience questionnaire every month to obtain feedback on the experiences you have had. Please speak to a member of

staff regarding the feedback or there are posters within the department with QR codes so you can complete these online.

Contact us

Language and accessible support services:

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch.

Your comments and concerns

If you would like to provide feedback you can:

- Ask to speak to the department lead / manager.
- Write to us: Patient Advice and Liaison Services, 1st Floor, Cobbett House, Manchester Royal Infirmary, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9WL.
- Log onto the Patient Opinion website www.patientopinion.org.uk/ click on 'Tell your Story'

If you would like to discuss a concern or make a complaint:

Ask to speak to the department manager – they may be able to help straight away.

Inpatients can speak to a senior nurse or manager by contacting the Tell Us Today service on (0161) 701 1999.

Contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (0161) 276 8686 email: pals@mft.nhs.uk. Ask for our information leaflet.

We welcome your feedback so we can continue to improve our services.

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

Telephone: 111, 24 hours a day

Website: www.111.nhs.uk

Finally

Some of your questions should have been answered by this leaflet, but remember that this is only a starting point for discussion about your treatment with the Doctors looking after you. Further information can be obtained by contacting the Radiology department that is performing the procedure.