

CT Scan Information

What is a CT Scan?

CT stands for Computerised Tomography. It is a special way of producing pictures of your body using X-rays and a computer.

What happens during CT Scan?

- A trained specialist called a radiographer will perform your CT Scan.
- You may be asked to change into a hospital gown.
- You might be asked to remove certain items of clothing and jewellery.
- The person completing the procedure will ask you to confirm some details including date of birth and pregnancy status.

The radiographer will take you into the scan room and ask you to lie on the CT table. When you are comfortable, the CT table moves very slowly towards the hole in the centre of the 'polo' shaped scanner. It is not a tunnel. The CT scanner makes a relatively loud noise whilst you are being scanned. The scanner will then produce the X-ray 'pictures'.

Sometimes you need a second scan after you have had an injection in your arm to outline the blood vessels. It may make you feel very warm for a few seconds.

The person performing the examination will provide you with instructions on what is needed and it is often very important that you remain still to ensure the best images are obtained.

Will I feel any pain?

You cannot feel the CT scans so the procedure itself is painless. On some occasions we may need to inject you with an x-ray dye, you may feel a sharp scratch when we first inject you with the needle.

It is important to get you into the correct position. Holding this position / lying on a table may, for some people, feel uncomfortable, but for the majority of patients this is not the case.

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 receive from our surroundings over a period of approximately 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.

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.

Extravasation

Contrast dyes (liquids) that are given to patients having a scan are usually given by injection into a vein in your arm or hand.

Occasionally the injection may leak out from your vein into the tissues under the skin – this is known as extravasation.

If this has happened, you may experience a stinging sensation where the contrast has gone into the tissue and it can be painful. This will usually wear off after about 30 minutes.

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

In order to comply with radiation regulations, any person aged between 12 and 55 years of age who is having periods must have this examination within the first 10 days of their period (counting the first day as day 1), unless you have been sterilised, have had contraceptive implants/injections for three months or more or have an IUCD (coil) fitted.

This is to avoid irradiation of the foetus in the early stages of pregnancy.

If this appointment does not fall within the first 10 days of the start of your period, please phone the department where your appointment is (details in your appointment letter) and we will amend your appointment.

How do I prepare for my CT Scan?

Please arrive promptly at the time of your appointment and report to main X-ray Reception.

If you have diabetes, any allergies or kidney problems, please inform the department as soon as you receive this appointment. If you have asthma please bring your inhaler with you.

For patients having an appointment at Manchester Royal Infirmary or Trafford General, if you need an ambulance ask your GP's surgery to arrange this for you and tell them it is a 'special' appointment.

If your appointment is at Wythenshawe, the arrangements for transport will be made via the department, please notify the bookings staff.

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.

Children:

Unfortunately, we do not have childcare facilities. If you need to bring your children with you, please bring along an adult who can supervise them while your examination is being done.

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.

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.

How long will it take?

Be prepared to be in the department for up to 45 minutes.

The images are recorded, and the radiographer will check them briefly to make sure that they can be used to make a diagnosis.

When it is completed, you will be allowed to leave the examination room.

The radiographer will usually not be able to give you any idea of the results at that time.

What happens after a CT scan?

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.

When will I get my results?

The images will be studied by a radiologist (a doctor who uses x-rays to diagnose and treat illness) and the results will be sent to the person who referred you for the examination.

The department aims to report the images within 14 days from your referral for a 2 week wait appointment. For routine appointments, results can take up to 30 days from the appointment.

You may already have an appointment with the clinician who referred you. If not, please contact them to arrange a time to talk about the results and any treatment you may need.

If you are staying in hospital, the results will be given to the doctors looking after you on the ward.

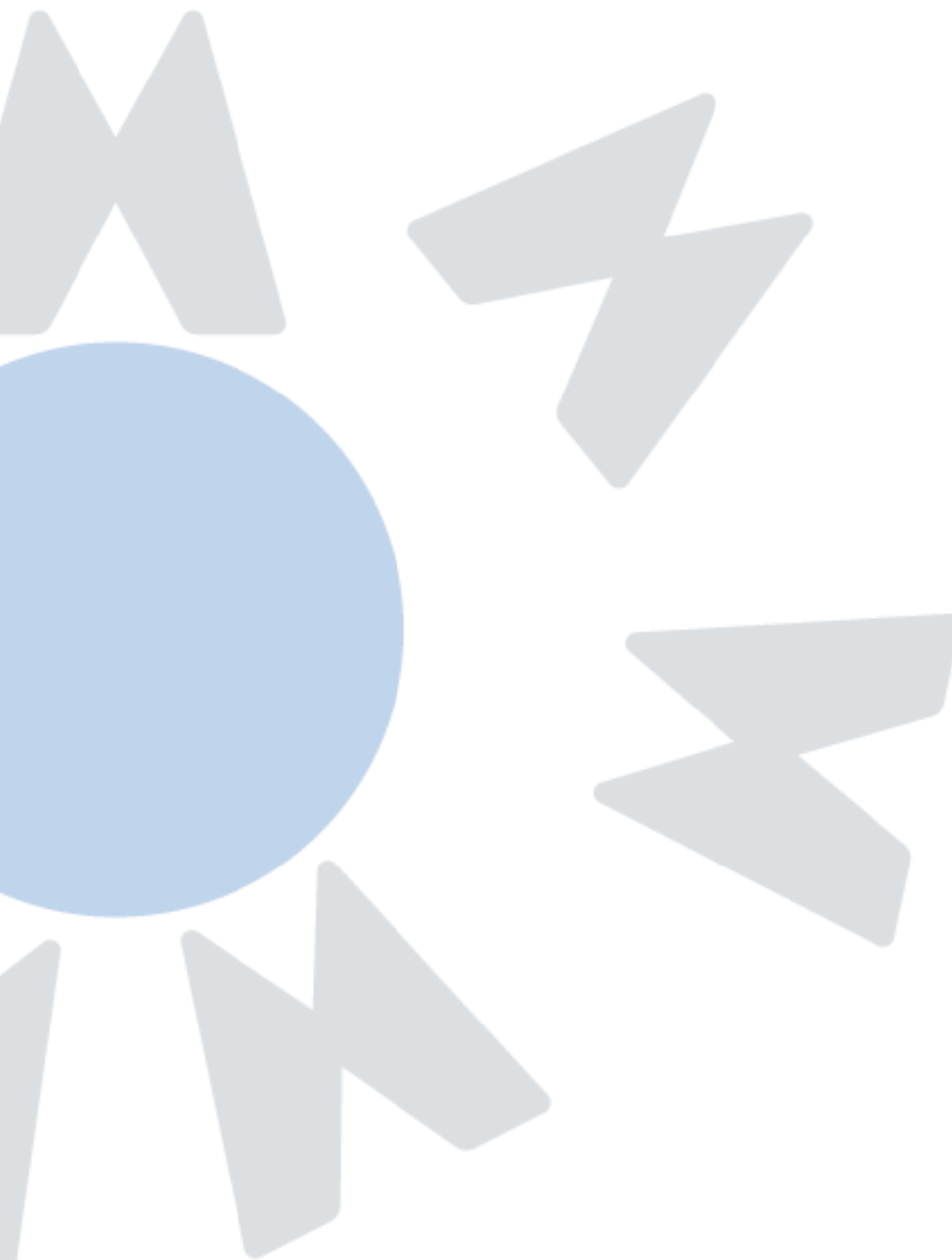
What should I do if I have a problem?

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

If you feel your condition has changed, or you need further medical advice before receiving your results/after leaving the hospital, 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

For contact information please refer to your appointment letter or if you are an inpatient please direct your queries to one of the medical staff on the ward

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.