

## How long will it take?

If you are given fluid to drink on arrival, you might have to wait an hour before entering the scanning room.

The scanning process will then take about 20 minutes. Unless you are delayed by having to wait, such as for an emergency patient, the total time in the department will be about 90 minutes.

## When will I get the results?

The scan will be examined after your visit and a written report on the findings sent to your referring doctor which is normally available in 14 days.

## Are you required to make any special preparations?

Unless you have been told otherwise, you may eat and drink normally before and after the scan.

If you are having a CT scan of your chest/abdomen/pelvis, you may be required to drink fluid called oral contrast before the examination is performed.

This should be taken slowly over a period of one hour; that is, you should drink approximately one cup every 10 minutes.

## Can you eat and drink afterwards?

Yes.

## Is there anything I should tell the Radiographer before the scan?

**YES.** You should let the radiographer know if you have:

- diabetes,
- kidney problems,
- asthma or any allergies or
- may be pregnant.

## Cancelling your appointment

If you are unable to attend for your appointment, we would be grateful if you could call us on (057) 9259045 to reschedule/cancel. We can offer this appointment to another patient.

If you fail to attend your appointment, it may be necessary to remove you from the waiting list.

## Have you any other questions?

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 or radiographer looking after you.

Make sure you are satisfied that you have received enough information about the procedure.



# CT Scan Information for Patients



## What is a CT scan?

A CT scan is carried out by using a special X-ray machine, which produces an image of a cross-section, or slice, of the body. The scanner consists of a 'doughnut-shaped' structure, or gantry, about two feet thick with a hole in its centre, through which you pass while lying on a couch.

A narrow fan-shaped beam of X-rays is produced from inside the gantry and rotates in a complete circle around you. The X-rays pass through your body and are detected by electronic sensors on the other side of the gantry. This information passes to a computer which produces a picture of the internal structure of the body. The pictures are displayed on a screen for examination by the radiologist.

It takes about less than a second to produce each slice.



## When you arrive

Please go to the reception desk in the radiology department. You will be shown where to wait until collected by a radiographer or other member of staff.

The procedure for your examination will be explained to you.

## Are there any Risks?

CT scanning involves the use of X-rays. Women who are or might be pregnant must inform a member of staff in advance. The amount of radiation used is more than an ordinary X-ray of the chest or body and is equal to the natural radiation that we receive from the atmosphere over a period of approximately a few weeks to a few years, depending on the type of CT examination.

Many CT examinations involve you having a contrast medium injected into a vein to increase the quality of information obtained from the scan. The injection usually causes nothing more than a warm feeling passing around your body. The radiographer will check any allergies you may have and if you have had the injection before.

## Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes, but for reasons of safety, they may not be able to accompany you into the examination room, except in very special circumstances.

## What happens during a CT scan?

You will be taken into the special X-ray room and made comfortable lying on the couch. Straps and pillows may be used to help maintain the correct position and to keep you still during the examination.

You may be given an injection of a contrast medium into a vein in your arm a few seconds before the scan starts. The couch will be moved slowly to position the part of your body under investigation within the 'doughnut'.

The radiographers will retire to the control room but you will be able to talk to them via an intercom, and they will be watching you and listening all the time.

When you enter the CT scanner special lights may be used to ensure that you are properly positioned. With modern CT scanners, you will only hear slight buzzing, clicking and whirring sounds as the CT scanners revolves during the course of the procedure.

During the scan, you may be asked to hold your breath or not swallow while images are being produced. However, if you feel any discomfort or apprehension, please tell the radiographer immediately.