

CT (Computed Tomography) Information

What is a CT scan?

Computed Tomography (CT) is a method of obtaining highly detailed pictures of the inside of your body in cross-sections or slices. A rotating X-ray tube and a computer are used to produce these images, which are carried out by specially trained operators called Radiographers. The pictures are then examined by a Radiologist (a doctor who specialises in reading X-ray images).

The CT scanner is an open ring-like structure often referred to as the giant doughnut. In some instances you may need an injection of contrast medium (X-ray Dye) into a vein in your arm.

What happens when I arrive in the department?

You will be greeted by the reception staff or Radiology assistants. For some examinations you may be asked to arrive a set time before your appointment time to drink a special fluid to highlight the stomach or bowel on the scan pictures, or you may have been asked to drink a litre of water prior to your arrival.

Please do not bring children requiring supervision with you when attending for your appointment as staff cannot be responsible for them.

What happens during the scan?

You will be taken into the scan room and asked to confirm your identification. The Radiographer may ask you some questions about your general health and medications before they start the scan and you can ask any questions you may have also.

You will then be asked to lie on your back or your front on the scanning table. The scan table will then be moved so that the relevant part of your body will be in the scanner. You will be asked to remain very still, and you may be asked to hold your breath while the scanner is taking pictures. The scanner is not noisy and the procedure should not be painful. The Radiographer who performs the scan and the radiology assistant can see and hear you at all times via a window and intercom.

How long will it take?

The scan should normally take 10-20mins depending on the body part being imaged. We try to make sure appointments run on time but there may be emergencies that must take priority.

Will I need an Injection?

Some patients need an injection of contrast (X-ray dye) into a vein in the arm. This dye highlights the blood vessels and the body organs more clearly on the scan. A small plastic tube called a cannula is inserted into a vein through which the dye is injected; this may be slightly uncomfortable but no more than a blood test. If you need an injection you will be asked about your medical history such as allergies, asthma, or kidney problems.

Are there any side effects?

If you have an injection as with any medication, there may be associated side effects. These are rare and usually mild such as a rash or nausea. The side effects usually appear very shortly after the injection but delayed reactions can happen up to 48hours after your scan. If you do encounter any side effects please contact your GP for further advice.

Can you eat and drink after the scan?

Yes. If you have an injection, you should hydrate well for 48hours after your scan. You should follow your normal diet and medication regime unless instructed otherwise.

How will you get your results?

The Radiology department will send a report of your scan to the doctor who requested it.

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

Access to Radiology

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Hours | 08:45-16:45 Monday-Friday Appointments Office: 01603 286081 07:00-20:00 7 days a week CT Control Room: 01603 289273 |
| How to find us: | East Outpatients entrance - follow the signs to Level 2 Radiology, CT. You can find more information at: www.nnuh.nhs.uk |
| Hospital transport: | To enquire about hospital transport telephone 0333 240 4100 |
| Contact details: | Telephone: 01603 288469 Email: radiology@nnuh.nhs.uk Website: www.nnuh.nhs.uk/departments/radiology-nnuh |

