

# CT Scanning

## Information for patients

---



## CT Department

## What is a CT scanner and how does it work?

The initials CT stand for Computerised Tomography. CT is a method of obtaining high quality images of the human body using x-rays, which are then processed by a powerful computer. The CT scanner is used to take cross-sectional pictures of the body and can show both bone and soft tissues.

## What will the CT examination involve?

You will be asked to lie still on the scanning table. The scanning table will move periodically throughout the scan, however, you will not feel anything whilst the scan is being done. The scanner sounds like a washing machine.



The radiographer will be in contact with you throughout the scan which will typically take about 5 – 10 minutes. You may need to have an injection of X-ray contrast in your arm during the scan (which highlights the blood vessels). If so, you may experience a warm feeling as the contrast circulates around your body.

## What preparations will be required?

For some scans you may be asked to fast or to drink fluid before your appointment. Please check your appointment letter for instructions. You may also be asked to drink some x-ray contrast (which highlights the bowel) over a period of an hour before your scan; this will be included in your appointment time. You may be asked to change into a gown as zips/clips in your clothing may affect the images.

Alternatively, you may prefer to wear clothing with no zips/clips or metal and therefore avoid the need to change into a gown.

## Questions we may ask before your scan:

- Are you pregnant? If you think you may be pregnant please contact the department at the earliest opportunity to discuss.
- Do you have any allergies?
- Are you asthmatic?
- Are you diabetic? What medication, if any, are you on?
- Do you have any problems with your kidneys?
- Do you suffer from hay fever?
- Have you ever had a reaction to x-ray dye in the past? If so, please contact the department at the earliest opportunity to discuss.

## What if I am taking any medication?

Do not stop taking any prescribed medications, as it will not affect your scan. Nor will the scan affect the usefulness of the drug.

## What happens after the scan?

Once your examination is complete and the scan pictures have been checked to ensure we have all the information we need, you will be able to go home. If you have had an injection of contrast you will be asked to remain in the department for 15 minutes while the body absorbs it. You should experience no discomfort and can return to your normal daily routine.

## How will I get my scan results?

### If you are an outpatient referral:

The result will be sent to your doctor or the consultant who asked for the CT scan, normally within one working week. The referring doctor/consultant will then send you a follow-up appointment/letter to discuss your CT results with them.

## If you are a GP referral:

Please contact the surgery after 7 – 10 days.

**Scan results are not available from the CT scanning department.**

## Keeping your appointment

If you cannot keep your appointment, or have been given one that is unsuitable, please change it by phoning the number on your appointment letter.

Your call will give someone else the chance to be seen and will help us keep waiting times to a minimum.

## Public transport and travel information

### Bus details available from:

Lothian Buses on 0131 555 6363 or [www.lothianbuses.co.uk](http://www.lothianbuses.co.uk)

Traveline Scotland on 08712 002 233 or [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com)

### Train details available from:

National Rail Enquiries on 03457 484 950 or [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

## Patient transport

Patient transport will only be made available if you have a medical or clinical need. Telephone **0300 123 1236** (calls charged at local rate) up to 28 days in advance to book, making sure you have your CHI Number available.

A text relay service is available if you are hard of hearing or speech impaired. They can be contacted on: **18001-0300 123 1236** (calls charged at local rate).

To cancel patient transport, you should telephone 0800 389 1333 (Freephone 24 hour answer service).