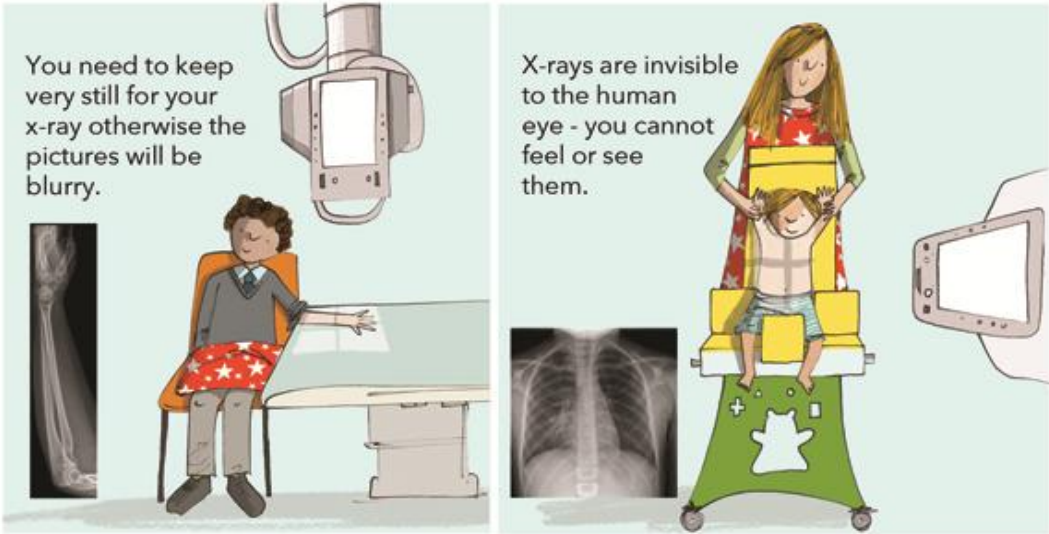
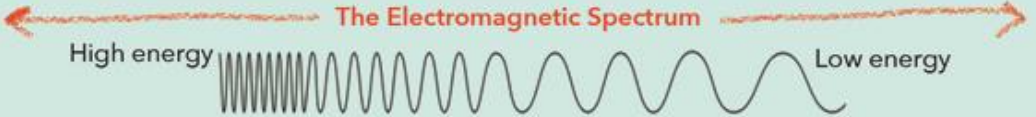


# What are x-rays?



An x-ray beam passes through your body to produce pictures in shades of grey. Calcium in bones absorbs x-rays the most so bones look white - Fat and soft tissues absorb less and look grey - Air absorbs the least so lungs look black.

X-rays are a type of electromagnetic wave and so travel through a vacuum at the speed of light. Electromagnetic waves form a spectrum, from short wavelength (high energy) cosmic rays, through visible light, to long wavelength (low energy) radio waves.



Come for your  
X-ray

At The Imaging Department  
  
Place Royal Hospital for Children and Young People  
Little France  
Edinburgh  
EH16 4SA  
  
Tel: 0131 312 0896



SCAN and Find more  
information about  
Scans and X-rays



# Information for parents and carers -

## What is an x-ray?

X-ray machines use radiation to generate the “pictures” we need for your child’s diagnosis and treatment. An x-ray beam is passed through the body to produce an image in shades of grey. Bones absorb x-rays the most so they appear white, whilst air absorbs the least so look black.

## What will the test involve?

Your child is having an x-ray so that the doctor or health care practitioner can either make a diagnosis or monitor the progress of their treatment.

Our overriding concern is to ensure that when anyone has an x-ray, the benefits from making the right diagnosis or providing the correct treatment outweigh the very low risk involved with the x-ray itself. We make sure that this is the case before anyone has an x-ray.

When you arrive you will be taken to the x-ray room where you will meet the radiographer. Depending on which part of their body is to be x-rayed, your child may need to be undressed and in the case of older children, the department will provide a gown for them to wear. It is important that your child is still for the x-ray. You can stay with your child to comfort and distract them and when necessary help to hold them in the correct position.

If you are or may be pregnant you will not be able to stay beside your child, please tell the radiographer.

## Can you feel an x-ray?

You can not feel, see or hear an x-ray. An x-ray does not hurt.

## How will I get the results of the x-ray?

The result will be sent to the doctor who asked for this test. If this was your GP, please contact them directly after 7–10 days. The staff in the Imaging Department are unable to give results over the phone.

## What if I do not speak English?

If you need help with the English language please phone **0131 312 0896** as soon as possible and we can arrange an interpreter for you.

# About x-ray and radiation

X-ray machines use radiation to generate the “pictures” we need for your child’s diagnosis and treatment.

We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. This comes from our environment, the air we breathe, the food we eat (eg. bananas and brazil nuts) and even from outer space (cosmic rays).

In Scotland, the largest contribution comes from natural radiation in the underlying rocks and building materials (granite). In any one year our exposure will vary according to where we’ve lived, where we may have flown to, and what we may have eaten.

## Putting it in Perspective

Each medical x-ray therefore gives us a small additional dose on top of this natural background radiation. The level of dose varies with the type of examination.

Common x-ray examinations such as the chest, the torso and the limbs, involve amounts of radiation that are equivalent to less than 3 weeks of natural background radiation.

The x-ray your child will be having today is one of those and carries a very low risk.

## How do I get to x-ray?

X-ray is in the Imaging Department on the ground floor. Book in for your appointment at the Imaging Department reception.

## For more information about the Imaging Department and your scan.

Please visit [www.children.nhslothian.scot/the-rhcyp](http://www.children.nhslothian.scot/the-rhcyp)

## 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 08712002233 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)

**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.