

Radiology Department

Herniogram examination

Information for patients



Herniogram examination

The X-ray department has received a request for you to have a Herniogram examination. This leaflet tells you the purpose of the examination, what's involved and what the risks are. We will also send you an appointment letter which will tell you where to go for your appointment.

- If you cannot attend your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible. Please telephone us on the number on the front of your appointment letter.
- If you are female and of childbearing age, i.e. up to 55 years old, we will ask you to complete a form asking about the dates of your periods. (You may already have done this.) This is because the examination should usually only be performed when we can be sure that you are not pregnant. Please complete and return this form as soon as possible so that we can give you an appropriate appointment date.
- If you weigh more than 146 kg or 23 stone, please tell us immediately.

If you need hospital transport to reach the hospital, please tell us as soon as possible.

What is a Herniogram examination?

This is an X-ray test to see whether you have any hernias (bulging out areas) in your abdomen. Some X-ray dye is injected into your abdomen and pictures are taken.

Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes, but for reasons of safety they will not be able to accompany you into the X-ray room except in very special circumstances.

Are there any risks?

- Exposure to radiation: This is a low dose examination and the amount of radiation is kept to a minimum. This is equivalent to the amount of background radiation that you naturally receive over 2-4 months.
- Very rarely the needle may puncture a blood vessel or an organ in your abdomen such as the bladder or bowel. Even if this happens there are usually no problems and we would ask you to stay in hospital for a few hours just to check that you are OK.
- Very very rarely, there can be serious bleeding or a leak from the bowel, so that an operation to close the hole is necessary.
- There is a very small risk of infection inside your abdomen.

Your doctor has recommended this examination because he/she feels that the benefits are greater than the risk of not having the examination. Even so, this test cannot be guaranteed to detect all abnormalities.

Alternatives

There are no alternatives to this procedure.

What happens at home before the examination?

No special preparation or special diet is needed before the examination.

What happens during the examination?

The procedure usually lasts about 45 minutes but you may be at the hospital longer if we need to see emergency patients.

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown to make sure that no metal coins/objects or bra straps are seen on the pictures. Please make sure you empty your bladder before you go into the examination room.

A doctor will explain the procedure to you. If you have any questions, please ask the doctor. We will ask you to sign a consent form to say you agree to the procedure. The doctor may examine your abdomen before the procedure begins.

The doctor will clean your abdomen with sterile liquid and inject some local anaesthetic, usually just below your bellybutton, to numb the skin. This does sting for a few minutes. A very fine needle is then slowly put into your abdomen. The doctor will use the X-ray machine to check exactly when the needle reaches the lining of your abdomen, and then inject the X-ray dye. The needle is taken out. You will be asked to roll around so that the dye coats the lining of the abdomen. The doctor will then take pictures with you coughing and standing in different positions.

Side effects and what happens after the examination?

- We ask you to stay in the hospital for half an hour, just to check you are OK.
- You may feel a little sore where the needle went in, especially when the local anaesthetic wears off.
- You can eat and drink normally.
- If you get any worrying symptoms such as severe pain, fever, shaking attacks or fainting, contact your GP urgently. This could indicate a leak, infection or bleeding. This is very, very rare.

When and how will I know the result of the examination?

The pictures of your abdomen will be examined by the radiologist, who will then send a report of the results to the doctor who referred you.

- If your GP referred you the report is sent to him or her and you can make an appointment to see them 10 days later.
- If a doctor/consultant from the outpatient department referred you then the result will be sent out in time for your next outpatient appointment. If you do not yet have another outpatient appointment and do not hear anything within three weeks, you should telephone the consultant's secretary for advice.

Questions or concerns

If you have any questions you can telephone us on the number on the front of your appointment letter.

Further information

Further information about the Radiology department can be found on the Trust website: **www.oxfordradcliffe.nhs.uk/forpatients/departments/departments.aspx**

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@orh.nhs.uk**

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