

Radiology Department

# Transit study examination

Information for patients



## Transit study examination

The X-ray department has received a request for you to have a transit study 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 transit study examination?

This is an X-ray test which shows how long it takes (the transit time) for food to pass through your bowel. The purpose of the test is to try to find out what may be causing your symptoms (e.g. constipation).

We will ask you to swallow some special capsules – one a day for 6 days before the examination. Each capsule contains 10 radio-opaque markers which will show up on X-ray. These capsules and markers contain no medication and are inert so will pass through your tummy with no effect.

On the 7th day, after taking all the capsules, you will be asked to attend the X-ray department where we will take an X-ray picture of your abdomen.

## 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 1 month.

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 in the bowel.

## Alternatives

There are no alternatives to this procedure.

## What happens at home before the examination?

We will give you the 6 capsules which each contain 10 radio-opaque markers which show up on X-ray. We will ask you to take one capsule a day for 6 days before the examination.

These capsules should be taken at the same time of the day over 6 days, preferably in the morning.

- 1 capsule (labelled 1) on Day 1
- 1 capsule (labelled 1) on Day 2
- 1 capsule (labelled 2) on Day 3
- 1 capsule (labelled 2) on Day 4
- 1 capsule (labelled 3) on Day 5
- 1 capsule (labelled 3) on Day 6

Please stop taking medications which affect your bowel movements (e.g. Fybogel, Lactulose, Dulcolax, Immodium, Movicol, Codeine, Iron tablets) for the duration of the test starting on the day you take your first tablet. You may take all your other medication as normal.

By stopping this bowel medication the doctor will be able to get a true picture of your bowel function. If you continue to take any of these medications the results of the test may be affected. If you are unable to stop your medication for six days, please call us.

You don't need to follow any special diet before the examination so you can eat and drink normally.

## What happens during the examination?

The procedure usually lasts about 10 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. If you need to go to the toilet you should also do this before the test begins.

You will be asked to lie on your back on the X-ray table and the radiographer will take an X-ray of your abdomen. Once the radiographer has checked that the picture is adequate, this test is completed.

## Side effects and what happens after the examination?

There are no side effects from these capsules and markers and they will be passed with your stool over the next few days.

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 person 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](http://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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