

Radiology Department

CT Enterography examination

Information for patients



This leaflet explains CT Enterography, what is involved and the risks. Details of what you need to do to prepare for this examination are included in another diet leaflet, which is enclosed. Please read it carefully.

If you are diabetic, asthmatic, have any specific allergies or are unable to drink the amount of fluid required for the scan due to heart and / or kidney disease please tell us, as we may need to send you further information.

For women between the ages of 12-55 years it is important to carry out this examination within 10 days of the start of your menstrual cycle (period). This is because the examination should usually be performed when we can be sure that you are not pregnant. If the appointment date does not fall within this time please telephone for another appointment.

What is a CT Enterography examination?

It is a test that looks at the middle part of your intestine – called the small bowel. It involves drinking fluid (a special laxative) to fill the small bowel. You will then have a CT scan of your abdomen and pelvis. A CT scanner is an open, ring-shaped machine which uses X-rays to take detailed pictures in 'thin slice sections'. The purpose of the test is to try to find out what may be causing your symptoms (e.g. abdominal pain, weight loss).

Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes, but for reasons of safety they will not be able to come with you into the CT scan room. Please be aware that there is limited seating in the waiting area so during busy periods accompanying visitors may be asked to return for their relatives later.

What happens at home before the examination?

In order to see the small bowel clearly, it must be empty. On the day before the examination we will ask you to follow a special diet.

Please read and follow the enclosed information sheet which tells you about the special diet instructions.

- If you take any drugs that cause constipation, you should stop taking these 4 days before the examination. If in doubt, consult your GP.
- If you are taking iron tablets you should stop taking them 7 days before the examination because they also cause constipation.
- Please continue to take all your other medications as normal.

On the day of the examination

When you arrive in the department you will be greeted by the reception staff and radiology assistants.

A small tube called a venflon will be placed in one of the veins in your arm. This is used to give you an X-ray dye during the CT scan. You will be asked to drink up to 2 litres of a clear fluid (polyethylene glycol – also known as Klean-Prep™). You will need to drink this over a period of an hour after which you will be taken to the CT scan room.

In the scan room the radiographers will explain the CT examination to you and what to expect.

You will be asked to lie on your back on the scanning table. The scanning table moves your body through the scanner so that the relevant areas can be scanned. You may be asked to hold your breath. We understand that some people have difficulty holding

their breath – please let us know if at the time if this is difficult for you.

The scanner is not noisy and the procedure should not be painful. The radiographers and the radiology assistants can see and hear you at all times through a connecting window and intercom. You should only be in the CT scan room for around 15 minutes.

The entire procedure usually takes up to 1.5 hours but you may be longer if we have unscheduled emergency patients. We will keep you informed of any delays.

Will I need an injection?

In the scan room you will be given an injection of X-ray dye (we call it 'contrast') into a vein in your arm. This means the abdominal organs and bowel can be seen clearly. The cannula (venflon tube) through which the contrast is injected is the one placed in a vein in your arm in the preparation area before you are taken in to the scan room.

We will ask you about any medical history of diabetes, asthma or kidney problems.

During the injection you may experience a metallic taste in the mouth and a warm sensation throughout your body which lasts for about 30 seconds. You will be asked to tell the scanning staff if you feel any discomfort in the arm during the scan.

You will also be given an injection of Buscopan to relax your bowel and make the examination more comfortable. We will ask you about any previous history of heart problems or allergy to Buscopan before we give you the drug.

Once the scan is completed, you will have the venflon tube in your arm removed by the waiting room staff and you will be able to go home.

Are there any risks?

- There is minimal exposure to radiation. This is approximately the same as the amount you normally receive from the environment over three years. We are all exposed to background radiation from the environment every day of our lives. This is normal and natural. Medical x-rays give an additional dose and the level of dose varies with each examination. The amount of radiation is kept to a minimum by radiation dose controls on the scanner.
- There is a slight risk from the Buscopan injection to patients who have heart problems which are not controlled with medication. We will ask if you have heart disease or have had an allergic reaction to Buscopan in the past.
- Rarely, some people have an allergic reaction to the contrast injection, which contains iodine. Please tell the radiographers if you have had an allergic reaction to iodine or contrast dye in the past or if you have any other allergies.
- Very rarely, the contrast may cause some kidney damage in people who already have kidney problems.
- Rarely, the contrast can leak outside the vein to cause temporary swelling and discomfort in the arm. This is unlikely to happen but if it does we will give you further instructions and advice.

Your doctor has recommended this examination because he/she feels that the benefits of the procedure outweigh the risks of having the examination.

Side effects and what happens after the examination

- The large amount of liquid which has been put into your small bowel will pass through quickly into your large bowel and give you diarrhoea but this will not last long.
- Drink plenty of fluids (several glasses of water) after the examination to quench thirst. If you have heart or kidney disease it may not be safe for you to drink this much. If in doubt or you find you become breathless or your legs swell up, contact your GP. If your GP is closed please contact your local Accident and Emergency department.
- If you have a stoma please bring a spare bag to the appointment. Please make the waiting room staff aware that you have a stoma as this may mean that you will not need to drink the fluid for as long as an hour.
- You may feel bloated after the examination but this should settle.
- You can resume your normal diet as quickly as possible.
- If you are a diabetic taking Metformin we will speak to you about the possible need to stop taking Metformin for 48 hours after the scan.
- The Buscopan injection may blur your eyesight over the next few hours. Do not drive or operate dangerous machinery until you are sure your eyesight is back to normal.
- In the rare event that after the examination you develop a red eye and painful blurred vision in one or both eyes you must go to the hospital Emergency Department immediately for assessment. Please bring this leaflet with you.

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

The images of your bowel will be examined by the radiologist, and a report will be sent to the person who referred you.

- If your GP referred you, the report will be sent to the GP practice and you can make an appointment for 10 days later to get the results.
- If a doctor from the outpatient department referred you, the result will be sent out in time for your next outpatient appointment. If you do not have another appointment and do not hear anything within three weeks, you should telephone your consultant's secretary.

Questions /further information

If you have any queries we will be happy to answer questions on the day of the appointment or you can telephone us on the number given on your appointment letter.

More information is available on the following websites:

www.impactscan.org/patientguide.htm – Patient information and guide to CT scanning

www.rcr.ac.uk – Royal College of Radiologists – Information under the patient and carers section

www.goingfora.com – Follow the Radiology signpost for an interactive guide

<http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/> – Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust website

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk – Search for CT Scan for more information

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@ouh.nhs.uk**

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