

CT Colon (Long Prep)

Information for patients



Radiology Department

This leaflet contains important information about your scan.

Please read all sections of the leaflet carefully and follow the important instructions.

Patient Information Leaflet CT Colon (Long Prep).

This leaflet explains what happens during a CT Colon scan (CT Long Prep). It tells you what is involved and about the risks and benefits of having the examination. It also gives details of what you need to do to prepare for this examination.

There is a 5ml spoon and one bottle of Gastrografin liquid enclosed with this leaflet. You will need to take Gastrografin as part of the preparation for this test.

If you weigh more than 203kg (32 stone) please contact us using the telephone number at the top of your appointment letter as soon as possible, as you may be above the weight limit for the scanning table.

What is a CT (Computerised Tomography) Long Prep Colon scan?

This is a type of scan which uses X-rays linked to a sophisticated computer to create detailed pictures of your body in 'slice sections' (cross sections) of the last section of your intestines (the Large Bowel).

The CT scanner is an open ring-like structure (please see cover photo) which looks a bit like a giant doughnut, rather than a tunnel as everybody expects!

The images will be looked at and a report written by the radiologist to see what might be the cause of your symptoms.

Can I take my prescribed medicines as usual?

Yes, you can continue to take all your regular medicines as prescribed, unless you have been told otherwise.

Caution

Keep all tablets and medicines out of reach of children. Never give any medicines prescribed for you to anyone else.

What clothing should I wear?

You may wish to wear loose clothing that can be removed easily. You may be asked to change into a hospital gown, depending on which area of your body is being scanned.

If you wear clothing which does not have any metal (zips or buttons, bra wires or fasteners, or decoration), it may be possible to carry out the scan without you having to change your clothes.

Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes, but they will not be able to go with you into the scan room, except in special circumstances. There is limited seating in the CT waiting areas of all our sites, so during busy periods your accompanying visitor may be asked to return later. We will telephone them to let them know when you are ready to be collected. Please be aware that we cannot guarantee that we can care for young children whilst you are having your scan.

Interpreter

If you require an interpreter for your scan, please contact the appointments team on the telephone number on your appointment letter and this will be arranged for you. Please be aware that it is Trust policy that family and friends cannot act as an interpreter for your scan.

How do I prepare for the scan?

You will need to take the Gastrografin liquid twice a day for three days before the examination. This will act as a 'dye' to show up the large bowel and its contents on the scan pictures.

You will need to start taking the Gastrografin as directed below, at 12 noon three days before your appointment. It can be taken with or without food as you prefer.

You do not need to make any changes to your usual diet or follow a specific diet for this examination.

Add 5ml of Gastrografin to 500ml (approximately two medium sized glasses) of water (flavoured squash can be added to improve the taste) and drink 500ml diluted Gastrografin on the following days and times:

	Date	Day	12:00 (Midday)	20:00 (8pm)
3 Days Before Scan				
2 Days Before Scan				
1 Day Before Scan				
Day of Examination			Appointment at:	Take at 7am
			Appointment at:	Take at 10am

NB: Please use the table to help you record when you have taken each dose by ticking the box

Does Gastrografin have any side effects?

Gastrografin bowel preparation

All drugs may cause some side effects. Most people who take Gastrografin cope well and experience few side effects. In some people Gastrografin can cause a feeling of nausea or lead to vomiting. If you experience any skin rashes, itching, chest tightening or itchy eyes you should stop taking the Gastrografin and seek medical advice, either by phoning the radiology department or your GP practice.

If you experience any swollen lips, tongue or face, and have trouble breathing you maybe experiencing an anaphylactic reaction. Although this is extremely rare, it is important to get medical help, so dial 999 immediately.

For more information on anaphylaxis reaction please see the link below;

Anaphylaxis - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

In some people Gastrografin can cause a feeling of nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea, skin rashes and very rarely an anaphylactic/allergic type reaction.

You may experience a number of episodes of diarrhoea after drinking the Gastrografin.

This is a normal part of preparing your bowel for the examination. Please ensure that you keep well hydrated with clear liquids (please do not have drinks made with milk) and aim to drink up to 1.5 to 3 litres a day. Please note that Gastrografin is not designed to clear your bowel contents completely and you may therefore still feel that you have loose stools on the morning of the examination, which is quite normal.

PLEASE CONTACT THE CT IMAGING BOOKING OFFICE ON 01295 229 788 IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY:

- You have any allergies, in particular to iodine
- There is any possibility that you are pregnant
- You have hyperthyroidism
- You are taking beta-blockers
- You have swallowing difficulties resulting in regular choking/ coughing episodes when drinking fluids
- You have been treated with Interleukin-2
- You require an interpreter booking, as we are unable to use family members to interpret, due to the nature of the procedure
- You weigh more than 203kg (32 stone).

PLEASE DO NOT TAKE THE GASTROGRAFIN UNTIL YOU HAVE SPOKEN TO US IF ANY OF THE ABOVE APPLY.

On the day of the examination

Please refer to your appointment letter for the appointment time. You may eat and drink normally on the day of the scan up until two hours before the scan. Please do not have anything to eat for two hours prior to the scan.

On arrival in the department you will be greeted by the reception staff and directed to a CT waiting area. The Radiology staff will check your identity and prepare you for your scan.

You may be in the Radiology department for up to an hour. The Radiology department also provides an emergency service to sick patients. If this happens, your appointment may be delayed. We will do our best to keep you informed of any delays that may occur.

You will be given some more dilute Gastrografin to drink on arrival. This will show up, the upper part of your digestive tract (the small bowel) when you have the scan.

You will be asked to complete a Contrast Safety Questionnaire about your medical history e.g. diabetes, heart problems, asthma, kidney problems so that we can assess any risks of giving you contrast dye.

If you require the contrast dye, a cannula (small plastic tube) will be inserted into a vein in your arm so that we can give you an injection of the contrast dye during the procedure. This cannula will either be put in when you are in the CT waiting room or later, when you go into the scan room.

What happens during the scan?

After all preparation has been done (getting changed and having the cannula fitted, if needed) you will be taken to the CT room. You will meet the radiographers, who will explain the CT scan to you and tell you what to expect. You can ask any questions you may have.

If you are female and aged between 12 and 55, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire about your menstrual cycle before the scan takes place. You will be asked when the first day of your last period was. This is to ensure that you are not pregnant, as X-rays can cause damage to an unborn baby. If it has been more than 10 days since the start of your last period and we cannot exclude that you are not pregnant, we may need to rebook your scan. If this is the case we will ask you to contact the department on the first day of your next period to rebook your scan. If it is more than 28 days from the first day of your period, you may be asked to take a pregnancy test.

If there is any possibility that you might be pregnant, please contact the Radiology department before your appointment.

You will be asked to lie on your back on the scanning table. The scanning table moves the relevant parts of your body through the scanner. You may be asked to hold your breath whilst the scanner takes the pictures. We understand that some people have difficulty holding their breath – please explain any difficulties that you have to us at the time.

We may give you an injection of an iodine based dye called 'contrast' into a vein in your arm before we take the scan pictures. You will also be informed of what to expect during the injection of contrast (generally a metallic taste in the mouth and a warm sensation throughout the body which lasts for about 30 seconds). Please tell us if you experience any discomfort in the arm during the scan.

The scan itself should not be painful. The radiographer who carries out the scan and the radiology assistant can see and hear you at all times through a connecting window and an intercom.

How long does the scan take?

The actual scan only takes a minute or two, but the preparation takes longer. You may be in the scan room for up to 15 minutes.

You should allow up to an hour from the start of your appointment before you will be ready to go home.

What happens after the scan?

You can leave soon after the scan and continue with your normal daily activities. If you had X-ray contrast dye as part of the scan, you will be asked to remain in the department for up to 20 minutes, because some people may develop a delayed allergic reaction to the dye. If this does occur, we will treat you in the radiology department.

You can eat and drink as you would normally.

If you have an injection of contrast you may be advised to slightly increase your fluid intake for the rest of the day. This helps to dilute the contrast and minimise potential damage to your kidneys.

If you are diabetic and taking metformin, we will speak to you about whether you need to stop taking this medication for 48 hours after the scan and visiting your GP for a blood test.

If you had the injection of contrast dye, you can remove the gauze dressing from your arm after one hour.

Are there any risks?

Exposure to radiation

CT scans are generally safe but you will be exposed to X-ray radiation. We are all exposed to background radiation from the ground, building materials and the air, every day of our lives, this is normal and natural. Medical X-rays give an additional dose and the amount of radiation you're exposed to during a CT scan varies, depending on how much of your body is scanned.

Generally, the amount of radiation you're exposed to during each scan is the equivalent to between a few months and a few years of exposure to natural radiation from the environment. It's thought exposure to radiation during CT scans could slightly increase your chances of developing cancer many years later, although this risk is thought to be very small (less than 1 in 1,000).

The benefits and risks of having a CT scan will always be weighed up by your doctor and the specialists in radiology before your CT scan, to ensure that this is the best procedure for you to have to diagnose (or treat) your condition. The radiographers always ensure that the radiation dose is always kept as low as possible and CT scanners are designed to make sure you're not exposed to unnecessarily high levels.

NB: For more information, read GOV.UK: patient dose information.

Contrast Injection

The contrast injection contains iodine, which can cause an allergic reaction in a few people. You should tell the radiographers who are carrying out the scan 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 dye may cause some kidney damage in people who already have kidney problems. We will ask you to complete a questionnaire on the day of the examination before the procedure takes place, to assess the risks of giving you the contrast dye. We may also take a small sample of your blood to test your kidney function.

There is a small chance that the contrast injection can leak outside the vein and cause temporary swelling and discomfort in the arm; this does not happen very often. In the unlikely event of this happening, we will provide you with further instructions and advice.

When and how will I know the result of the CT scan?

You will not receive the results straight away. The images will be looked at and a report written by the Radiologist.

The written report will be sent to the doctor that referred you to us; this is not necessarily your GP. If you are unsure who referred you for the scan, please ask the Radiographers whilst you are in the scan room.

If you do not have another outpatient appointment and do not hear anything about the results within three weeks, please telephone the referring doctor or their secretary for advice. If you do not have their number, please telephone the hospital switchboard and ask to be put through to them:

Tel: **0300 304 7777**

Questions or concerns

If you have any queries or are unable to come for your appointment, please telephone us using the following telephone numbers (Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm):

Tel: **01295 229 788**
01295 229 019

Further Information

Further patient information is available on the following websites:

The Society of Radiographers

There are short videos showing the way in which X-rays and scans are used, including CT scanning.

Website: www.sor.org/about-radiography/patient-information

NHS Choices:

Website: www.nhs.uk/conditions/CT-scan/Pages/introduction.aspx

For further information about the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust:

Website: www.ouh.nhs.uk

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

Author: CT Modality Team
August 2021
Review: August 2024
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
www.ouh.nhs.uk/information



Making a difference across our hospitals

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