

What are the risks associated with a CT ?

CT scans are performed using x-rays. The amount of radiation you receive is relatively small and the risks are low. Your Dr will have weighed the benefit of improved diagnosis of your condition against the risk of radiation exposure. The dose of x-ray radiation needed for a CT scan is much more than for a single x-ray, but in many situations the benefit of a CT scan greatly outweighs the risk. Women who are or might be pregnant ***must*** inform the Radiology Department ***before*** their appointment by ringing **01 8092786**.

The contrast that is used contains iodine which some people are allergic to. There is also a risk that contrast can go into the surrounding tissue rather than the vein causing pain and swelling (extravasation). It is important to inform the radiographer if you experience any pain or breathing problems during administration and they will stop the scan if necessary.

How long will a Virtual CT Colonography scan take?

You will be in the CT Department for approximately 3 hours. This allows time to take the drink (over 2 hours) and the total

time for the procedure is approximately 30-40 mins. While we endeavour to scan our patients at their appointed times, priority must be given to the critically ill & injured, which occasionally results in delays. With this in mind please be prepared to be in the department for approximately 3-4 hours.

After the Scan

When the scan is complete, the Radiologist will remove the tube from the back passage and you will be shown to the toilet. The nurse will remove the cannula from your arm. You will be offered tea/coffee and toast. It is important to drink plenty of fluids before and after the scan. It is common to have some bloating in your abdomen for a short period after the scan.

The results will not be available immediately. The results will be sent to the clinician who referred you for the scan.

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Patient Information

CT Virtual Colonography

Important Note

Please read the enclosed Bowel Preparation Letter and follow the instructions exactly as per the sheet.

Please contact 01-8092786 if you wish to reschedule your appointment.

Introduction

A CT Virtual Colonography scan has been requested for you and this leaflet explains what the scan involves and what you need to do to prepare for your scan.

What is a CT Virtual Colonography scan?

CT Virtual Colonography is a technique used for non-invasive imaging of the entire colon. It has the advantage of not requiring any sedatives and other areas of the body can be imaged at the same time. In most cases of incomplete colonoscopy where patients are unable to undergo a repeat colonoscopy, CT Virtual Colonography is an excellent alternative. CT scans are performed using X-rays which are a type of radiation.

How is CT Virtual Colonography done?

You will be asked to put on a gown. The procedure begins by lying on the CT Table. The Radiologist will insert a small, flexible rubber tubing into the rectum so that gas can be introduced. You may receive an intravenous injection of a medicine to relax the muscles in your colon. This may cause blurring of vision in some patients and it is recommended not to drive for one hour after this injection if

affected. Once the colon is filled with gas, the scan is then performed while you lie on the CT table, first on your stomach and then on your back. You may also have a scan lying on your side. Occasionally intravenous contrast, an X-ray dye, may be used to aid visualisation of the other organs in your abdomen during the CT Colonography scan. This injection may make you feel hot, give you a metallic taste in your mouth and it may make you feel like you are passing urine but you will not. These side effects will pass quickly and they may not affect everyone.

It is important to tell your doctor and / or contact the CT department on 01-8092786 PRIOR to your CT scan appointment if you:

- Had a previous allergic reaction to x-ray contrast
- Have any allergies
- Have asthma
- Are diabetic and taking metformin (e.g. Glucophage; Janumet; Vokanamet; Xigduo; Synjardy; Competact; Vipdomet; Jentadueto; Komboglyse; Eucreas)
- Have reduced renal function
- **Are pregnant or breastfeeding**

What preparation is needed for a Virtual CT Colonography scan?

The Virtual CT Colonography scan may require a cleaning bowel preparation (3 Days in advance) in order to remove bowel residue that may interfere with the accuracy of the examination. However some patients may be asked to follow a Low Residue Diet. **Please read the enclosed Bowel Preparation Letter very carefully prior to your appointment.**

The CT Department is located on the Lower Ground Floor of the hospital. Please check in at the X-Ray reception. When you arrive in the CT Department you **will be** given a cup of a liquid called Gastrografin to drink. You will then be given 500ml of water to drink over two hours. This preparation will enable a more accurate diagnosis.

