

CT abdomen

with prolonged oral preparation

i Information for patients
Radiology



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SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



What is a CT abdomen scan with prolonged oral preparation?

CT is a short way of saying Computed Tomography.

An abdominal CT scan with prolonged oral preparation is a specialised test to look specifically at your large bowel. It can also look at all your abdominal organs at the same time. Images are taken in 'slices' through your abdomen. These images can then be put together to create a 3D picture of your abdomen and bowel.

What does a CT scanner look like?



A CT scanner looks like a giant polo mint. It is circular with a large hole in the middle and is open at both ends.

During the scan you will be asked to lie on the scan table. The table will move in and out of the hole in the middle of the scanner as it takes the images.

Why do I need a CT scan?

You have been asked to have a CT scan. This may be because you are having:

- Abdominal pain
- Altered bowel habits
- Unexplained weight loss
- Loss of blood / anaemia.

You may have had inconclusive or failed tests, such as a colonoscopy, or your consultant may feel that you are unable to tolerate these tests.

A CT scan produces very detailed images of your abdomen and may help provide extra information about your condition. If you are unsure why the scan is necessary, it is best to talk to your doctor who will have all your details.

Will I need any special preparation for the scan?

You will be asked to collect a special preparation to have for the test. This is a small bottle of fluid called Omnipaque which is a type of x-ray dye.

- The preparation should be started 3 days before the CT scan appointment.
- The bottle of Omnipaque will contain enough dye to make 10 portions of the drink.
- 1 portion is made by diluting 5mls of Omnipaque in approximately 100 mls of water

Example:

3 days before scan:

- Take 1 portion as described (5mls Omnipaque in 100 mls water) 3 times daily with breakfast, lunch and dinner.

REPEAT this for the next 2 days

Day of the scan

- Take the 10th and final portion with your breakfast

What will happen when I arrive?

On arrival in the Radiology department you will need to book in at the main reception. You will have been asked to arrive 10 minutes before your appointment time. A clinical assistant or radiographer will collect you and take you to prepare for your scan.

Will I need an injection?

You may require an injection of X-ray contrast (dye) which is a liquid that highlights your blood vessels and organs on the scan and helps give more information. This is given via a cannula (a thin tube) which will be inserted into a vein before you go into the scanning room if you need it.

Who performs my scan?

The person who carries out the scan is called a **radiographer**. They will explain your procedure thoroughly when you come for your appointment.

A **radiologist** (a doctor specially trained in looking at X-rays) will interpret the scan and send the results to your doctor.

What will happen during the scan?

When it is time for your scan you will be taken into the scanning room and asked to lay on the scanner bed. The radiographer will ask you some questions to ensure that it is safe to continue with the scan and give you the injection, should you need it.

You will be scanned several times, during which you will move in and out of the scanner. For each scan you will be asked to hold your breath for up to 15 seconds. It is important that you hold your breath and keep still as the motion from breathing and moving causes blurring and can ruin the scan pictures. The CT scanners we use are very fast modern scanners.

What happens after the scan?

Once the scan is complete you will be asked to return to the waiting area. If you have been given the injection of X-ray dye during the scan you will be asked to wait in the department for an extra 15 minutes. The cannula will be left in your arm so that we can monitor you to make sure the effects from the injection have worn off and that you feel alright before you leave. Once your cannula has been removed by a member of the CT staff, pressure will need to be applied to the site to prevent bruising for 5 minutes. You will then be able to leave the department.

Be careful not to knock the injection site once you have left the department, particularly if you take **aspirin or warfarin** as this can cause the injection site to bleed again. If bleeding occurs apply pressure to the area using a clean cloth or gauze to stop the bleeding and reduce any bruising.

The injection of X-ray dye causes no known effects on the ability to drive or operate machinery.

How long does it take?

The scan itself will take approximately 10 minutes. Please be aware that you will be asked to arrive 10 minutes earlier to prepare for the scan. You will be asked to wait in the department for an extra 15 minutes after the scan. You should anticipate being in the department for 1½ - 2 hours.

Due to the nature of our workload we often have to perform emergency scans which must be prioritised. Whilst we try to keep to appointment times this may occasionally cause slight delays with routine appointments. We thank you for your patience.

Are there any risks?

There are a few risks involved with a CT scan. They include:

Radiation - A CT scan uses radiation in the form of X-rays. The amount of radiation used is more than for an ordinary x-ray of the same area but is equal to the amount of natural radiation from the atmosphere we all receive over a few years. This adds very slightly to the risk, for example of developing a cancer, but this risk is very small. The amount of radiation is kept to a minimum to reduce this risk and a CT scan is considered a safe procedure.

The effective dose for an abdominal CT scan is 10 mSv which is equivalent to 4½ years of background radiation for an adult and this may increase your lifetime risk of cancer by 0.02%.

Your doctor has chosen this test for good reason and feels that the benefit of having the CT scan is greater than the risk from the radiation.

Radiation, pregnancy and women of childbearing age - If you are of child bearing age and are still having regular periods we need to know the dates of your last menstrual period. **As this is a CT scan to**

include your abdomen and pelvis we need to ensure that the first day of your last period is within 10 days of the scan. This is to ensure that we do not mistakenly irradiate a foetus/unborn baby. You may be asked to book the CT appointment to coincide with these dates, however if you attend for your scan and are outside of these dates you will be asked to take a pregnancy test to ensure you are not pregnant. This is precautionary, but for safety and legal reasons must be done.

X-rays can be harmful to your unborn baby, it is important to tell the CT staff if you are or think you may be pregnant.



Reaction to the injections - The X-ray dye used for this test contains iodine and it does have some natural side effects, which are:

- Hot flush
- Metallic taste in the mouth
- Sensation of passing water

These feelings usually pass within a few minutes.

We take every precaution to ensure that you will have no adverse effect from the injection, however very occasionally (in less than 0.03% of cases) patients can have an allergic reaction to the dye. This can manifest itself as an itchy rash, shortness of breath and, in extremely rare cases, swelling of the throat and other body parts.

A reaction to the X-ray dye usually occurs within minutes of the injection, however on rare occasions a reaction may not occur until you have left the scanning department. If you experience a reaction after you have left the department do not hesitate to contact your GP or the local A&E department

To prevent the occurrence of an allergic reaction, please inform staff of any allergies you may have.

Asthma - On rare occasions the X-ray dye can bring on an asthma attack, if you are asthmatic please remember to bring your inhalers with you.

Kidney function - The X-ray dye injection can cause your kidneys to work more slowly, this is only a problem if you already suffer with kidney problems. If you have not had a recent blood test you will need to have one before the scan to check your kidneys are working properly. You should only require a blood test if you are diabetic, have existing kidneys problems or are aged 65 or over. Your doctor will organise this for you. Depending on these blood results you may need to be hydrated before and after the scan. This can involve drinking 1 litre of water before and after the scan or you may need to come into hospital and be put on a

drip for a few hours before and after the scan. Once we receive your blood test results you will be informed if this is necessary for you.

Shall I continue taking my medication?

Yes, continue taking any medication unless you are advised otherwise. If you are diabetic and taking Metformin you may need to stop taking this.

If you are diabetic and taking Metformin please contact the CT scanning department as soon as possible; we will advise you when to stop taking your medication if appropriate. Our telephone number is provided on your appointment letter.

When will I get my results?

We cannot give you your results straight away as the radiologist will need time to review your scan pictures in detail. Your results will be sent to the doctor who referred you for the scan. You may have an outpatient appointment booked with your doctor at which you can discuss the results of the scan. If you do not have an appointment booked you will be sent one once your doctor has received the results.

Are there any alternative tests?

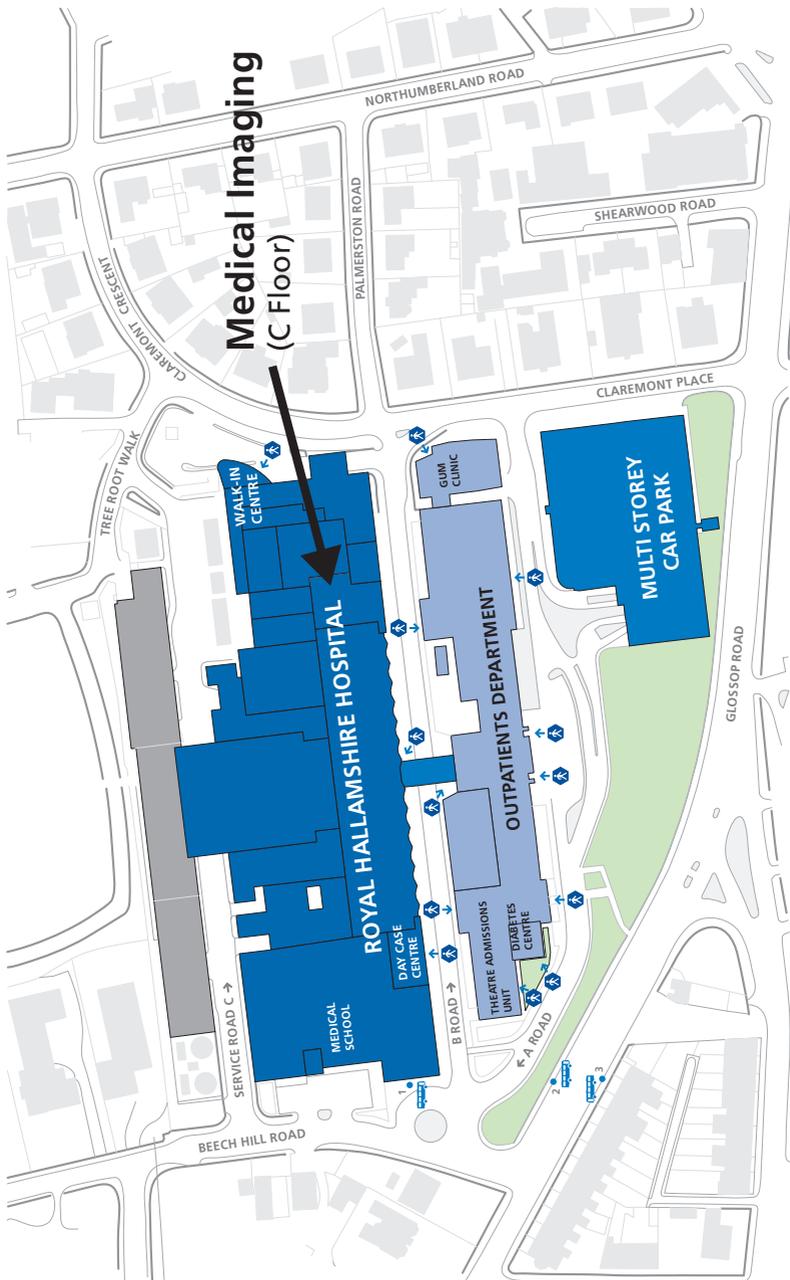
Your doctor has referred you for a CT scan because they feel that this is the best test for you. However, if you feel unhappy about having a CT scan there may be alternative tests that you can have. You will need to discuss these with the doctor who arranged for you to have the scan.

What if I still have some questions?

After reading this leaflet, if you want to know more or have any concerns you can contact the doctor who referred you for the scan, the CT scanning department or you can ask the radiographer when you arrive for the scan.

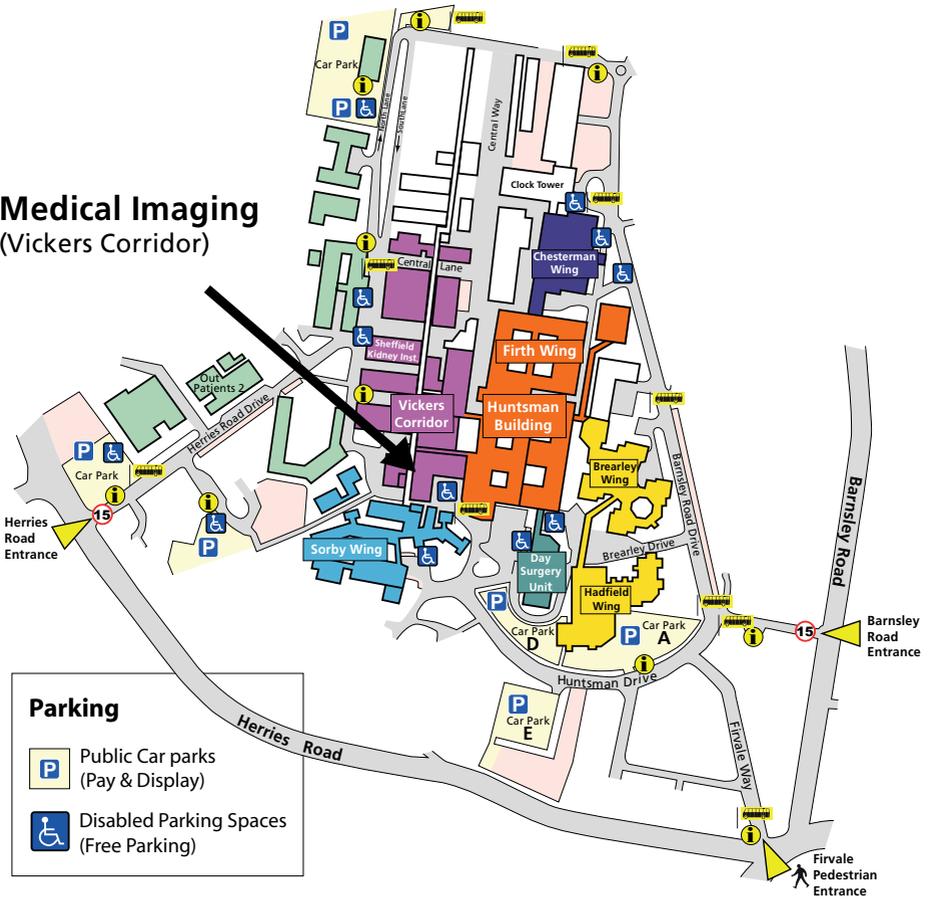
If you cannot make your appointment, or have any queries, please contact the CT scanning department. Our telephone number is provided on your appointment letter.

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Northern General Hospital

Medical Imaging (Vickers Corridor)



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