

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Undergoing a cardiac CT scan

It is important that you drink 500ml of water prior to your scan. You may do this at home or bring a bottle with you.

Your cardiologist has advised you to have a CT scan; this will give detailed information about the blood supply to your heart. This leaflet aims to explain the procedure and answer any queries you may have.

CT stands for Computed Tomography and simply refers to the technology of the equipment. CT is a scanning technique which uses x-rays to produce cross sectional images of the relevant part of the body. It can be used to diagnose many conditions and also monitor the success of treatment.

Please contact the CT department on 01623 622515, extension 3212, if:

- Your weight exceeds 30 stones (200 kilograms).
- You have an allergy to iodine.
- You are pregnant or there is any possibility that you may be pregnant.

If you need transport to the hospital please contact your GP to arrange this. Although the actual scan time is approximately 30 minutes, you will need to allow at least one hour for this appointment.

Please leave any valuables at home. You are responsible for all personal items you bring into hospital and the Trust cannot accept responsibility for their loss or damage.

On the day of your appointment

Please do **not** drink anything containing caffeine, for example tea, coffee, cola or energy drinks on the morning of your scan. You may eat normally and drink water, fruit juice or herbal tea freely.

The procedure

On arrival you may be asked to change into a gown or to remove some articles of clothing from your upper body.

We will go through a series of questions with you and a cannula (a small plastic tube through which an injection is given) will be inserted into your arm.

A radiographer or cardiac nurse will take you into the scan room and explain the procedure in more detail. You will be transferred to the scanner table and ECG leads attached to your chest. These are linked to the scanner and enable us to see images coinciding with your heart beat.

This scan can only be performed when your heart rate is within a certain range. You may need some medication through the cannula to achieve this; we will explain in more detail should this be necessary.

Before we start the scan, we may ask you to lie quietly for a few minutes to help settle your heart rate. The scanner table will move through the large doughnut shaped scanner.

Your body is never totally enclosed and you will be able to communicate with the CT staff through an intercom system. The scanner couch can be lowered and patients with mobility problems will be offered assistance.

During the scan we will give you an injection through the cannula of special fluid called contrast medium. This shows up the blood vessels around the heart.

You need to lie very still while the scan is in progress, and we will ask you to hold your breath for a period of time.

Risks from the procedure

To minimise any risks you will be asked a series of questions before the scan.

A small number of patients suffer allergic type reactions to the contrast medium, therefore you will need to remain in the department for a minimum of 20 minutes following your scan. Such reactions are usually minor and settle quite quickly without treatment.

Should we need to give you medication to lower your heart rate, the risks will be explained to you fully by the cardiac specialist nurse.

Very occasionally a small amount of the contrast medium may leak out of the vein into the surrounding tissue. You may experience some swelling and redness around the site of the injection.

Your examination will be performed using the minimum amount of radiation necessary to produce the images needed to help your doctor diagnose your illness, injury or monitor the progress of treatment.

We make sure the benefits from having the examination outweigh the very low risk involved.

Getting your results

When your scan is finished no instant diagnosis can be made. The images produced are recorded digitally and reviewed by a radiologist (x-ray doctor) who then sends a report to your hospital consultant.

These results will be discussed with you the next time you are in clinic. If you have not received your follow-up appointment within four weeks please contact your consultant's patient coordinator.

Finally

We aim to see you at your appointment time but please remember emergency patients are scanned as priority. Should there be a delay; the reasons will be explained to you.

Contact us

If you need any help before your appointment date you may contact the CT Department on 01623 622515, extension 3212.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515.

To be completed by the Communications office
Leaflet code: PIL202403-06-CTC
Created: November 2015/ Revised: March 2024 / Review Date:
March 2026