

## Your CT Scan (2) (Computer tomography)

### What is a CT scan?

A CT scan uses x-rays and a computer to construct special cross-sectional images of a designated area of your body. Imagine your body as a sliced loaf of bread. You would then be able to take out individual slices to view the internal structures as well as producing 3-D reconstructions of your body.

### Important

Female patients aged 12-55 years (or if you are having regular menstrual cycles) You must notify the department if:

- this appointment is not within 10 days of the start of your last menstrual period.
- there is a possibility that you may be pregnant.

If either of these applies, a new appointment may be made, depending on the examination you are having done.

### Risks and benefits

All medical procedures carry some risks. With this procedure, that risk would be radiation. All of our equipment is state-of-the-art and well within its natural working life expectancy.

It has routine service checks and is maintained with an on-going quality assurance programme. Radiation doses are kept as low as practicable.

We always weigh any risks to the benefits that may be gained from any procedure before going ahead. Your GP or Consultant and our radiology team will have agreed that the benefits to you will outweigh any risk of having this procedure. If you have any questions or do not wish to proceed, please contact us as soon as possible or speak to a member of our staff.

If you have had any x-ray procedure where you were injected with contrast (dye) and had a reaction to the contrast or if you have an allergy to iodine, please inform the radiographer on arrival.

### Do I need special preparation?

There is no special preparation for this scan. Take any regular medications as normal.

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**Where do I go when I arrive at the hospital?**

Enter through the Main Entrance of Colchester General Hospital. Continue down the main corridor. Just before you get to the bottom of the corridor to the T junction, you will see a sign on your left with X-Ray Beta Suite by the entrance. Proceed through the doors and to reception with your appointment letter.

**What will happen when I arrive?**

Depending on the exam you are having done, you may be asked to remove all of your clothing except your pants or knickers and shoes, and put on an x-ray gown. You may bring your own dressing gown to wear over this if you wish. You should then sit in the waiting area until your name is called. You will be called into the scanning suite as close to your appointment time as possible. The procedure will be explained to you and we will check for possible allergies if necessary.

**How is the scan performed?**

You will be taken into a special x-ray room and made comfortable lying on the couch. The couch will be moved slowly to position the part of your body under investigation within the 'doughnut'.

The radiographer will go in to the control room but you will be able to talk to them via an intercom, and they will be watching and listening all the time.

You may hear slight buzzing, clicking and whirring sounds as the CT scanner revolves during the course of the procedure.

The table will move in and out of the scanner as the x-ray pictures are taken.

During the scan, you may be asked to hold your breath; it is most important that you follow instructions closely and remain as still as possible during the filming sequences.

In rare cases to produce more finer detailed scan. A contrast medium maybe injected into your arm after the initial scan. All information and questions concerning this injection will be given to you at the time.

**Will it be uncomfortable?**

No. You will not feel any pain, although you may feel slight discomfort arising from having to lie still.

**How long will I be at the hospital?**

The scan itself usually takes 10-20 minutes, but from the time of your arrival until the completion of your examination will probably be approximately one hour. This can obviously change due to emergencies etc.

**After the examination**

You may resume normal activities.

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### **How do I find out the results?**

The results will be sent to the consultant who referred you for this examination. You should receive a follow-up appointment from the outpatient clinic.

### **Additional information**

If you have any questions about your examination please contact the CT department. The number can be found on the front of this leaflet.

If you have access to the Internet and would like more information of how a typical Radiology Department operates, visit [www.goingfora.com](http://www.goingfora.com) for a virtual tour.

Although your specific examination may not be shown on this tour, this is a good example and is produced and maintained by the Royal College of Radiologists.

We are always trying to improve our service to patients. We welcome your comments. If you have any, please inform a member of staff or if you prefer, you can write to the Radiology Services Manager at the address on the front of this leaflet.

### **Car parking**

Car parking is available within the hospital grounds. A ticket system is in operation; please bring some change. Parking is at best, difficult, and the car parks are situated some distance from the Radiology Department. Please allow adequate time so that you and anyone accompanying you can arrive in time for your appointment.

### **Your NHS number**

When you attend hospital you will be asked for your NHS number and other information such as your address. Please be patient with this procedure – it is to ensure our records are kept up to date and to protect your safety. However, if you do not know your NHS number, please do not worry – you will still receive care!

### **Concerns or complaints**

If you have any concerns or worries about your care please contact the department responsible. However, if you are unable to resolve your concerns or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the Integrated PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service), Complaints and Litigation Service on 01206 745926 or ask any member of staff for a leaflet, which will describe how you may make a complaint.

### **Your views**

If you or a family member has recently been in either Colchester General Hospital or Essex County Hospital for any reason, you can tell us about your experience by visiting the [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) website and then click on the "Comments" section, or write to the address on the front of this leaflet or email your comments to [info@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk](mailto:info@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk)

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