

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Undergoing CT colonography (Gastrografin and Picolax)

You will need to collect the following medication:

- **Picolax** from Pharmacy at King's Mill Hospital - you must take the prescription given to you in clinic or x-ray reception.
- **Gastrografin** (one bottle of special preparation) from x-ray reception at King's Mill Hospital or Newark Hospital **at least three days** before your appointment. Opening hours are between 9am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. Please take your appointment letter with you.

Your consultant has advised you to have a CT scan. 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.

You will need to contact us if:

- Your weight exceeds 30 stones or 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 only 30 to 45 minutes, you will need to allow 1½ hours 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.

Important

You must follow the strict diet in the attached leaflet and take the Picolax and Gastrografin as instructed. This is to ensure the bowel is thoroughly clean for this examination. If you have any questions regarding the preparation for this scan, please contact the CT department on 01623 622515, extension 3212.

Preparation for CT colonography

You will need to take the Gastrografin and Picolax on the day before your appointment. You may experience frequent, loose bowel motions and diarrhoea within a few hours of the first dose of Gastrografin, therefore, we advise you stay within easy reach of a toilet.

If you become sore you may use a barrier cream, for example Vaseline. Some abdominal discomfort can be expected.

Information for patients with diabetes

If you have diabetes, you may need advice prior to your procedure. Please contact the nurse who controls your diabetes or your GP.

Seven days before the procedure:

- Stop taking iron tablets.
- You may continue with other medication including laxatives.

Four days before the procedure:

- Stop taking any drug which causes constipation, for example Lomotil (loperamide), codeine phosphate.

On the day before the procedure:

- Follow the bowel preparation instructions and diet information enclosed.

On the day of the procedure:

- Continue with clear fluids.

The procedure

You will be asked to change into a gown. A radiographer will take you into the scan room and explain the procedure to you in more detail. Should you have any worries the staff will put you at ease and answer all your queries.

You are required to lie on a couch which will move through the large doughnut shaped scanner. Your body will never be 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.

For this scan it is necessary to insert a cannula (a small plastic tube through which an injection is given) into a vein in your arm. This allows us to inject a drug called Buscopan, which relaxes the bowel. If required we will also use this cannula to inject a special fluid called contrast medium to allow us to see the blood vessels more clearly.

A small tube will be inserted into the back passage to allow us to fill your bowel with air. You need to lie very still on your back while the scan is in progress, and we will ask you to hold your breath for a short time. We will then ask you to turn into different positions to enable us to do further scans.

Following the procedure

You may eat and drink normally. A high-fibre diet will help restore your normal bowel habit which will usually return within a couple of days.

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. If you have had an injection of contrast medium you will need to remain in the department for up to 20 minutes following your scan. Such reactions are usually minor and settle quite quickly without treatment.

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.

The injection of the bowel relaxant may cause blurring of vision but this normally clears within half an hour. Very rarely the injection can cause pain in the eye. If this does occur, contact your GP immediately.

Due to air being introduced into the bowel you may experience some bloating and discomfort.

Mild pain and faint like reactions are less common but may be experienced.

A tear in the lining of the bowel (perforation) is an extremely rare complication (1:3000).

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 (an x-ray doctor) who then sends a report to your hospital consultant.

The results of your scan will be discussed with you at your next clinic appointment. 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 (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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CT colonography with Gastrografin and Picolax

Bowel preparation and diet instructions

Drink plenty of clear fluids throughout the day. Because your intake of food is limited you may require the occasional sugary drink.

Take your normal medication except as detailed in the instructions below.

On the day before your examination

7am:

- Mix 75ml Gastrografin with 75ml water – you may add some squash for flavour.
- Drink the mixture.

8am:

- Take the first sachet of Picolax. Dissolve one sachet of Picolax in a cup of cold water (approximately 150ml). Stir for 2-3 minutes and then drink the solution. Sometimes the solution becomes warm as Picolax dissolves. If this happens, wait until it cools sufficiently before drinking it.
- You may now have a light breakfast. This meal should be limited to a boiled or poached egg, a slice of white bread with a scraping of butter or margarine. Tea and coffee may be taken but with NO milk or cream.

Continue to take all normal medication, except chlorpropamide, iron tablets and/or codeine which should be omitted until after your scan.

Mid-morning:

- Continue to drink plenty of clear fluids, including sugary drinks.
- Tea or coffee may be taken with NO milk or cream.

12pm (lunch):

- A 200g portion of steamed, poached, or grilled white fish, chicken, or tofu with two small (egg size) boiled potatoes or two slices of white bread.
- Jelly for dessert (this may contain sugar).

4pm:

- Take the second sachet of Picolax as instructed above.
- A mug of clear soup or Oxo/Bovril may be taken followed by a small portion of jelly (this may contain sugar).
- Continue to drink plenty of clear fluids including sugary drinks.
- Tea or coffee may be taken with NO milk or cream.

No solid food is to be eaten until after your scan.

If you are diabetic:

- **Do not** take any further diabetic medication until after your scan.
- Continue to take all other normal medication as outlined above.

7pm:

- Mix 25ml Gastrografin with 25ml water – you may add some squash for flavour.
- Drink the mixture and continue to drink plenty of clear fluids.

On the day of the examination

No solid food is allowed until after your scan but continue to drink plenty of clear fluids.