

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

# Undergoing CT colonography (Gastrograffin) Consent information

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.

Although the actual scan time is only 30 to 45 minutes, you will need to allow 1½ hours for this appointment.

### **Important**

You will need to follow a strict diet for one to three days prior to the procedure (explained fully in the appointment letter which will be sent out by the CT department).

You will be asked to drink a special preparation during the one to two days prior to the procedure.

Do you have an allergy to iodine? If so, please contact the CT department on 01623 622515, extension 3206, for advice.

### **The procedure**

You will be asked to change into a gown. A radiographer will then 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 will allow us to inject a special fluid called contrast medium to allow us to see the blood vessels more clearly.

We will also use this cannula to inject a drug which relaxes the bowel. 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.

### **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 so 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 the injection may escape into the surrounding tissues instead of the vein (extravasation). This can result in some discomfort at the injection site. Further advice will be given should this occur.

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.

Although x-rays are used to produce the images, a CT scan is considered to be a very safe procedure. Any slight risk from the use of x-rays is outweighed by the information provided by the scan.

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

Due to the laxative effect of the preparation given, you will visit the toilet more often sometimes causing soreness around your bottom. You are advised to use a barrier cream, for example Sudacrem, to help relieve this.

Mild pain and feeling faint are less common but may be experienced. A tear in the lining of the bowel (perforation) is an extremely rare complication and affects only one in 3000 patients (1:3000).

### **Contact us**

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

### **Your radiology records**

This Trust is part of a group of NHS hospitals in the East Midlands that have a shared NHS radiology system, which is used by our healthcare professionals to access your radiology records.

If necessary, your radiology records may also be accessed by healthcare professionals in other NHS hospitals in the East Midlands or NHS Service Providers, to ensure you receive consistent, safe and effective clinical care and treatment, irrespective of where you receive your care.

If you have any concerns about providing information or how we use it, please discuss this with radiology staff so that you fully understand the potential impact on your care or treatment.

### **Further sources of information**

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

To be completed by the Communications office  
Leaflet code: PIL202601-08-CTGCI  
Created: February 2016 / Revised: January 2026/  
Review Date: January 2028