

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

---

## Undergoing CT colonography (reduced dose Gastrografin)

---

You will need to collect a bottle of special preparation (Gastrografin) from x-ray reception at either King's Mill Hospital or Newark Hospital **at least three days** before your appointment between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday. Please bring 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.
- 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 outlined in this leaflet and take the 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 over the two days prior to 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.
- Follow the low residue diet overleaf for the next three days.

### Low residue diet

You may eat:

- ✓ White bread or toast with a scraping of butter or margarine.
- ✓ Honey, jelly, jam or syrup.
- ✓ Refined breakfast cereals for example Cornflakes or Rice Krispies - you may have a little milk and sugar.
- ✓ Plain biscuits, for example Rich Tea or Morning Coffee.
- ✓ Boiled or mashed potatoes.
- ✓ White or green pasta, white rice.
- ✓ Steamed, grilled or baked white fish, chicken or Tofu.
- ✓ Eggs – poached, boiled or scrambled.
- ✓ Plain cottage cheese, fromage frais or natural yoghurt.
- ✓ Boiled sweets, ice lollies, vanilla ice cream.
- ✓ Weak tea or coffee – you may have sugar and milk.
- ✓ Soft drinks, for example fruit squash or cordial.
- ✓ Clear soups, Oxo or Bovril

### Do not eat:

- × Wholemeal, granary or bran type bread.
- × Wholegrain breakfast cereals for example muesli, Shredded Wheat, Weetabix, All Bran, Bran Flakes.
- × Wholemeal pasta, brown rice.
- × Jacket, roasted or chipped potatoes
- × Dried fruit and nuts.
- × All fruit, vegetables and salad.

- × 'Cream of' or thick soups.

### Two days before the procedure:

- Continue to follow the low residue diet.
- At **8am** take 25ml (a quarter of a bottle) of Gastrografin diluted in a glass of cold water - squash may be added to improve the flavour.
- At **1pm** take 25ml Gastrografin as previously.

### The day before the procedure

Breakfast at 8am:

- Boiled or poached egg with white bread and a scraping of butter or margarine.
- Weak tea or coffee with a little milk.
- Unlimited soft drinks including water, Oxo or Bovril.

Please do not eat any cereals, jam or marmalade.

Mid-morning:

- Weak tea or coffee with a little milk, a Rich Tea or Morning Coffee biscuit.

Lunch at 12.30pm:

- Take 25ml Gastrografin as previously.
- A small portion of steamed, poached or grilled white fish or chicken with white rice, pasta or white bread.
- Clear jelly with plain yoghurt or ice-cream.
- Weak tea or coffee with a little milk.
- Unlimited soft drinks including water, Oxo or Bovril.

Evening meal at 6.30pm:

- Take 25ml Gastrografin as previously.
- Clear soup.
- Clear jelly for dessert.
- Weak tea or coffee **without** milk.

- Unlimited soft drinks including water, Oxo and Bovril.

**No food is allowed following this evening meal until after the procedure.**

Continue to drink plenty of clear fluids. You may suck barley sugar sweets or dextrose tablets.

### **On the day of the procedure**

Continue with clear fluids until two hours before your appointment.

### **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 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.

### **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.

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.

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).

### **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](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: PIL202403-06-CTCRDG  
Created: September 2017 / Revised: March 2024 /  
Review Date: March 2026