



**Department of Diagnostic Imaging
Ipswich Hospital**
Tel: 01473 702075



**East Suffolk and
North Essex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Welcome to the CT Scanning department

This leaflet will attempt to answer some questions you may have about your scan.

What does 'CT' stand for?

Computed Tomography: meaning a series of X-rays are taken and analysed by a computer to produce a set of cross-sectional pictures.

What is it used for?

The body naturally divides into head, chest, abdominal and pelvic regions. Usually only one or two regions will be scanned at the request of your doctor. The scan will show the individual organs, joints and soft tissue together with any damage caused by injury or disease.

Are X-rays safe?

People are often concerned about being exposed to radiation during an X-ray procedure. No X-ray examination will be performed without the benefit outweighing the risk.

Generally the amount of radiation you are exposed to during an X-ray procedure is equivalent to between a few days and a few years of exposure to natural radiation in the environment.

Being exposed to X-rays does carry a risk of causing cancer many years or decades later but this risk is thought to be very small.

For more information, go to www.gov.uk and search 'patient dose information'.

Is there any preparation required?

For body and abdominal scans you will need to drink water before your scan. Patients undergoing chest, abdomen, spine and pelvic examinations will be required to wear a gown.

If you have had a previous allergic reaction to X-ray dye, please contact us before your appointment.

Women who think they may be pregnant should contact us for further advice.

If you have any special needs or disabilities that may require attention, please let us know before your appointment date.

You may eat and drink normally unless otherwise instructed, and should take your usual medications as normal.

What will happen during the scan?

You will lie on the scanning couch and be moved through the centre of the scanner as pictures are taken. These pictures are displayed on a monitor and are then stored electronically. During the procedure it is important to keep still. Instructions will be given to you via an intercom.



Will I feel enclosed in a tunnel?

No, as the scanner is open on both sides. Staff will be close by to provide support.

Will I have an injection?

In some cases an injection is necessary. This is because in some instances it is necessary to 'highlight' specific areas of the body in order to achieve as much detail as possible from the scan. The injection will be given in a vein in your arm.

Will the CT scan be painful?

The scan is painless. In the case of chest and abdominal scans, you will be required to hold your breath for a few seconds for each scan.

Who does the scan?

A radiographer will take your scan. He or she is highly trained in operating the equipment and will provide for your individual care during and after your examination. A radiologist (a doctor who specialises in X-rays) will supervise your scan.

How long will it take?

The scan will take about 5–10 minutes. Please arrive at the time stated on your appointment letter.

You may be asked to wait after your examination for up to 15 minutes.

Are there any after effects?

There should be no after effects.

Will I have to wait?

We will make every effort to honour your appointment time but we are committed to cover occasional 'emergency' cases as a priority, when necessary.

You can help us stay on time by arriving 10 minutes before your appointment time to allow you time to get changed and, if necessary, have a cannula inserted ready for your scan.

What about my results?

You will receive them from your consultant or the doctor who asked for this test to be carried out.

Thank you for reading this leaflet. If you have any doubts or further questions regarding your examination, telephone **01473 702075** or ask on the day.

How to find the CT Scanning Department

The CT Scanning Department is situated in the Ipswich Hospital, within the Department of Diagnostic Imaging.

Enter the hospital building at the Outpatients entrance (6) and follow the signs to Diagnostic Imaging, then CT Scan.