

INFORMATION AND PREPARATION SHEET

CT SCAN

A guide to having a CT scan

This leaflet aims to answer any questions about having a CT scan. It explains the benefits, risks and alternative imaging, as well as what you can expect when you come to the CT department.

What is a CT scan?

CT stands for Computerised Tomography.

A CT scan takes a series of cross-sectional images of your body using x-rays. The images are manipulated by a complex computer and can be viewed on a monitor. The scan shows incredibly detailed images of the inside of your body. The scanner consists of a table and a ring-like structure that rotates around a small section of your body as you pass through it.

Who carries out the imaging?

The CT scan is carried out by a radiographer.

What are the benefits of having a CT scan?

A CT scan will help your doctor to find the cause of your problem and establish the best treatment for you.

Are there any alternatives?

Your doctor feels that a CT scan is the best option for you. A standard x-ray will not demonstrate the same level of detail. There are other scans which can be done. These include MRI [magnetic resonance imaging using a powerful magnet] and Ultrasound [using sound waves] but they may not be useful in patients with your condition.

What are the risks?

CT scans use radiation and the dose that you get from the examination is small and the associated risks are low. Clinical staff consider both the risks and benefits when deciding what examination is appropriate for you. The benefits of having the CT scan outweigh any risk. Clinical staff are responsible for making sure that the dose that you receive is kept as low as necessary to aid your diagnosis or treatment. If you think you may be pregnant then please contact our centralised appointments office on **028 961 58900** from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and they will forward your query to the relevant CT department.

Is there any preparation required?

Preparation will depend on the scan you are attending for. For some scans we will advise you not to eat or drink before it. Your appointment letter will tell you how long to fast before the scan if needs be. You can take all prescribed medication as normal.

When you arrive, depending on your examination you may be required to drink liquid prior to the scan. This highlights your stomach and bowel. If you have a colostomy or ileostomy, please let us know on arrival and please bring spare bags with you.

The CT staff may ask you to undress in a cubicle and wear a gown. You may wish to bring a dressing gown to wear. If your own clothing has no metal on it such as zips and metal buttons, then you may not have to undress for the scan.

If we are scanning your head, then head coverings, hairbands, grips and earrings will need to be removed. For certain scans, metallic dentures and hearing aids will also need removed.

The radiographer will then explain the procedure in full before taking you into the CT scanner. You can ask the radiographer any questions that you may have.

If you need to bring your children with you, please bring another adult as we do not offer childcare facilities. We ask that only the patients attend the appointment as we are trying to minimise the numbers attending the hospital. If you need assistance then someone will be allowed to attend with you.

Consent – asking for your consent

The radiographer will ask you if you agree for the scan to go ahead. This is called verbal consent. If you do not wish to have the scan or are undecided, please tell the radiographer.

It is your decision and you can change your mind at any time. Please bear in mind that not having the scan may delay your diagnosis.

Please remember that you can ask the radiographer any questions you have at any time before, during or after your scan.

What happens during my CT scan?

You will be asked to lie on the scanning table which moves your body through the scanner so that relevant areas can be scanned. You may be asked to hold your breath while the scanner takes the pictures. We understand that some people have difficulty holding their breath so please tell us at the time if this is a problem for you.

The scanner is not noisy, and the procedure should not be painful. The radiographer who performs the scan can always see and hear you via a connecting window and an intercom.

Will I need an injection?

Some patients need an injection of contrast into a vein in the arm. This dye highlights the blood vessels and body organs more clearly. The cannula is usually put into your arm in the preparation room before you go in for your scan. If you need the injection, we will ask you about any medical history of asthma, hay fever, heart or kidney problems. We will also ask if you have any allergies.

We will also tell you what to expect as the contrast is injected. You usually get a metallic taste in your mouth and warm sensation throughout your body. You may also feel you need to pass urine, but this is only a sensation and lasts for 30 seconds.

How long does CT scan take?

The scan takes up to 15 minutes. Your appointment may be delayed if we need to see emergency patients, but we will do our best to inform you of any delays. After the scan, if you have received an injection we ask you to sit outside and we keep the cannula in for another 10 minutes to ensure there is no sign of delayed reaction to the injection. We will then take the cannula out, but you must stay on the grounds of the hospital for a further 45 minutes. This is so that if you feel unwell you can come back to the department and we will deal with you accordingly.

What happens after the CT scan?

If you receive an injection of contrast, you can go home an hour after your CT scan. If you do not receive an injection of contrast you can go home immediately after your CT scan. You can eat and drink as normal after your scan.

When will I get my results?

The images are reported by a Radiologist and you will not receive any results immediately.

If your GP has referred you, the report will be sent to the GP within 14- 28 days.

If you were referred by a hospital doctor the report will be sent to them and the results should be available at your next outpatient appointment.

Image sharing

Your images will be electronically stored on the hospital picture archiving system. This data can be accessed throughout the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and other doctors and health care professionals who are directly involved in your care. The ability to share images and radiological reports will improve the safety and quality of your care by ensuring that the right information is available in the right place at the right time.

In order to improve the medical services we provide we may also use your data as anonymously as possible for internal audit and medical education. If you would prefer that your data is not used for these purposes, please inform a member of staff when you attend for your examination.

If your data is to be used for research, then a separate consent process will be used. You will be asked for your consent, should this be the case.

Contact us

If you have any queries, we will be happy to answer any questions on the day of your CT scan or you can contact the department where your scan has been scheduled:

Royal Victoria Hospital: 028961 50011

Belfast City Hospital: 028950 41120

Mater Infirmary Hospital: 082950 41569

Musgrave Park Hospital: 028950 41634

Feedback

We hope you found the information in this leaflet helpful. If it did not tell you what you needed to know or you would like to provide any feedback on your experience please let us know so that we can make any necessary improvements.

You can provide feedback on your experience:

Telephone: **028 9504 8000** (Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm)

Textphone: **18001 028 950 48000**

By email: compliments@belfasttrust.hscni.net

By email: complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net

By completing an online form:

<http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/contact/FeedbackForm.htm>

Care Opinion



We invite you to share your experience by clicking the following link:

<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/>

or by scanning the following QR code on your smartphone or tablet:



Language and accessible support services

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

If a Sign Language interpreter is required, please either telephone **028 9615 8900** via the Sign Video remote interpreting service (<https://signvideo.co.uk/deaf-community/>) or email us at MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net and we will arrange one for your appointment. Please have your H&C number ready when calling or include it in your email. This can be found at the top right corner of any Health and Social Care letters you may have received.

If you are unable to hear on the phone and need to contact us with regards to your appointment you can email us at MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net.

Do you need this information in another format or language?

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, including Braille, large print, CD, audio tape please contact the telephone number **028 9615 8900** or e-mail address MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net, and we will do our best to meet your needs.

Polish - Czy potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym formacie lub języku?

Fundusz ma dostęp do usług w zakresie tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych. Jeśli potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym języku lub formacie, w tym w piśmie Braille'a, dużym druku, na płycie CD, kasecie magnetofonowej, skontaktuj się z nami pod numerem telefonu lub adresem e-mail **028 9615 8900 / MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net**, a my dołożymy wszelkich starań, aby spełnić Twoje potrzeby.

هل تحتاج هذه المعلومات بصيغة أو بلغة أخرى؟ - Arabic

تستطيع الجمعية توفير خدمات الترجمة الفورية والتحريرية. إذا احتجت هذه المعلومات بلغة أو بصيغة أخرى، بما فيها صيغة برايل Braille أو صيغة بالأحرف الكبيرة، أو في سي دي CD أو في شريط مسموع، يُرجى الاتصال برقم التليفون أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900، وسوف نبذل قصارى جهدنا في تلبية احتياجاتك.

Lithuanian - Ar jums reikia šios informacijos kitu formatu ar kalba?

Tarnyba gali suteikti vertimo žodžiu ir raštu paslaugas. Jei reikia šios informacijos kita kalba ar formatu, įskaitant Brailio raštą, didelį šriftą, kompaktinį diską, garso įrašą, skambinkite telefonu arba susisiekite el. paštu MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900 ir mes padarysime viską, kad patenkintume jūsų poreikius.

Romanian - Aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-un alt format sau altă limbă?

Trustul are acces la servicii de interpretariat și traducere. Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-o altă limbă sau într-un alt format, inclusiv Braille, tipărire cu caractere de mari dimensiuni, CD, înregistrare audio, atunci vă rugăm să ne contactați la numărul de telefon sau la adresa de e-mail MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900, iar noi vom face tot posibilul pentru satisfacerea necesităților dumneavoastră.

Tetum - Ita presiza atu informasaun ida ne'e iha formatu ka lian seluk ka lae?

Fidusiáriu ida ne'e iha asesu ba servisu durubasa no tradusaun. Se Ita presiza informasaun ida ne'e iha lian ka formatu seluk, inklui letra Braile, letra boot, CD, kasete audio, entaun favór telefone númeru ka enderesu e-mail MPHAdminFOH@belfasttrust.hscni.net / 028 9615 8900, no ami sei halo esforsu tomak atu kumpre Ita-nia nesesidade sira.