CT Scan

Your doctor or healthcare professional may recommended a CT scan (also known as a CAT scan) because it is the best way for us to make an accurate diagnosis certain conditions. You may feel nervous about your scan, but we don?t want you to worry. Our experienced consultants and radiographers are friendly and approachable, and can answer any questions you may have.

What is a CT Scan?

CT is short for Computerised Tomography - a scan using special X-rays to take images of the body. A CT scan uses a computer to create ?slices? (cross sections) of the body and internal organs.

Some terms you may hear:

- Outpatient - being an outpatient simply means you are coming in to see us for an appointment. You don?t stay overnight.
- Radiographer - a professional trained to take X-rays and scans.
- Radiologist - a doctor specialising in interpreting X-rays.

During a CT scan (sometimes known as a CAT scan) a series of X-rays are taken of your inner body from slightly different angles. An advanced computer puts them all together, producing clear cross-sectional images. The detail in the images of a CT scan means that the radiologist can detect even tiny abnormalities. This accuracy helps in the early detection of disease and injury, allowing effective treatment planning. Like an X-ray, there are no known side effects of a CT scan and it is normally a pain free procedure.

A CT scan may not be suitable for everyone. If you are, or might be pregnant, please contact us on the number on your appointment letter as we may not be able to scan you.

Preparing to visit us

We want to make sure that you are fully informed. Please do call us if you have any questions before your appointment. If certain medical terms aren?t clear, we will explain them to you. If you?d like to bring a family member or friend to provide support, that?s no problem either.

At your appointment you will meet your radiographer who will be an expert in CT scanning. The radiographer will be with you throughout the whole process, from explaining the scan and answering your

questions beforehand, to performing the actual scan on the day. Your appointment can take up to 40 minutes, depending on the area of your body being scanned. For around half this time you will be lying down on the scanning bed. The actual scan will take less than a minute.

If you suffer from claustrophobia, you may find this procedure uncomfortable. If this is the case don?t worry. Just contact us on the number on your appointment letter. There may be other options for you, depending on the area of the body to be scanned.

No special preparation is needed, but we do want you to feel as comfortable as possible during your scan and for the procedure to go smoothly. There are some things to bear in mind before you come to us. You can eat and drink as normal and continue to take any prescribed medicines. Because we need to get images that are as clear as possible, please wear clothing that has no metallic parts, such as buttons, zips and hooks. If you are wearing an under-wired bra, you may be asked to remove it.

Some scanning beds have a weight limit for safe use - usually between 110 and 130kg (about 20 stone). If you feel this may be a problem please contact us so we can make arrangements with your safety and comfort in mind.

On the day of your CT scan

When you arrive for your appointment we?ll check your name, date of birth and address. At this time you?ll be given the opportunity to ask any questions. Any metal objects, such as jewellery, keys, coins or metal dentures will be kept safely for you during the scan. If necessary, your radiographer may ask you to change into a gown for the scan. This will only be if an item of clothing could interfere with the scan.

Consent

At your appointment, we will ask you to sign a consent form to show that you agree to the procedure and fully understand what will happen. You are free to ask any questions you want, to ensure that you are comfortable with everything before you sign.

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