

## Patient information factsheet

# Having a CT scan

A CT scan is a special type of x-ray examination showing the anatomy of the body in cross sections, i.e. like thin slices of the area being viewed.

CT stands for computerised tomography, a technical term for describing the way images are made.

### Before the CT scan

Please call the telephone number on this leaflet if you are or could be pregnant as it may not be advisable to proceed with the examination.

Do not eat or drink for two hours before the scan unless you have been advised to drink.

You should continue taking your usual medications. Patients on metformin or glucophage must not take these medications on the day of the CT scan and for 48 hours after the scan. These patients will also need to have their renal function checked by the GP prior to attending for the scan.

Please try to be punctual and do let us know if you are unable to attend your appointment.

### On arrival

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown. You may bring a dressing gown for your personal comfort and warmth.

It is important to let us know if you have any allergies.

You may be given a flavoured contrast drink. You may need to drink this over some time (30 minutes to three hours), depending on the examination requested.

You may also need an injection of a similar contrast into a vein to show the area of the body to be investigated in more detail. The injection may give you a general warm feeling, which goes away quickly.

You will be asked to lie still on the scanner couch while a radiographer takes pictures. The examination takes approximately 20 minutes.

### After the scan

You will be asked to remain in the hospital for half an hour after the contrast injection.

You will need to drink up to two litres of water over the 24-hour period after the scan.

You can resume normal activities immediately after the scan, as there are no after-effects from this examination.

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A radiologist doctor will interpret the images of your scan and a report will be sent within 14 to 21 days to the requesting specialist, who will give you the results at your follow-up outpatient appointment.

## Useful information

If you require transport, please contact your family doctor surgery to arrange it for you.

Children attending the department must be accompanied and supervised by an adult at all times.

Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage to personal property.

Please see our website [www.suht.nhs.uk](http://www.suht.nhs.uk) for details about parking, facilities and other information.

## Department location

Cross sectional imaging CT scanner  
B level  
Wessex Neurological Centre  
Southampton General Hospital  
Tremona Road  
Southampton  
SO16 6YD

Telephone: **023 8079 6885**

Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm.

**For a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone **023 8079 4688**.**