

Patient information factsheet

Having a T tube cholangiogram

This factsheet will give you information about having a T tube cholangiogram. We hope it will answer some of the questions you may have but, if there is anything you do not understand, a member of your healthcare team will be happy to explain further.

What is a T tube cholangiogram?

A cholangiogram is an x-ray test to examine your bile ducts using the drain that has been left in after your procedure or operation.

The procedure will take place in the radiology department and usually takes approximately 30 minutes but please allow one hour for your appointment.

Preparation for the procedure

No special preparation is needed and you can eat and drink as normal on the day

If you are female and of childbearing capacity, you will be asked to complete a form with the date of your last period and whether there is any possibility you may be pregnant. This is because this examination should only be performed when we can be sure that you are not pregnant.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you have problems standing or transferring from a wheelchair so that we can make arrangements

You should also let us know if you have had any previous allergic reactions to iodine or x-ray contrast (a liquid that is visible on x-ray). Our telephone number is over the page.

What to bring with you

You might want to bring your own dressing gown, slippers and reading material.

During the procedure

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown before being taken to the examination room. The radiologist (a doctor who uses x-rays to diagnose illnesses) will inject x-ray contrast (a liquid which shows up on x-rays) through your drain so your bile ducts and bowel are visible using x-rays. X-ray pictures will then be taken.

Most people do not find the procedure painful but you may experience some discomfort when the x-ray contrast is injected.

After the procedure

We suggest that you remain in the hospital for one hour after the procedure in case you feel unwell. We also suggest that you have someone with you for the rest of the day.

No special care is necessary after the procedure and you can return to your usual daily activities.

Risks

There is a very small risk of developing an infection as a result of the procedure. If you feel unwell in the days following the procedure, for example you experience abdominal pain, shivers or sweats, you should consult your doctor or attend the emergency department.

There is some exposure to radiation during the procedure because x-rays are used. However, as this is a low dose examination, exposure to radiation is kept to a minimum. Generally, the amount of radiation you are exposed to during this procedure is equivalent to between a few days and a few years of exposure to natural radiation from the environment.

Results

The radiologist will examine the pictures and a report of the findings will be sent to the doctor who requested the procedure. This report should be available at your outpatient follow up appointment.

Further information

Some of your questions should have been answered in this factsheet but remember that this is only a starting point for discussion about your treatment with the doctors looking after you.

It is important that you are satisfied that you have received enough information about the procedure. If you have any questions before or after the examination please telephone the radiology department on **023 8120 4870** from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Useful links

NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.