

## Patient information factsheet

# CT colonography (with intravenous contrast)

You have had a procedure called a CT colonography today. This is a test that uses CT scans to check the large bowel (colon) and back passage (rectum).

Please keep this factsheet to hand so you can refer to it over the next few days. If you have any further questions, please speak to a member of your healthcare team who will be pleased to advise you.

### After your procedure

- As soon as you are comfortable enough to leave the department, you will be free to go home.
- You may feel bloated, have more wind than normal or have diarrhoea today. We advise you to stay within easy reach of a toilet.
- You may return to your normal diet. Try to drink plenty of fluids for the next few days.
- Some people experience soreness around their back passage as a result of the preparation for the test. If this is the case, an appropriate cream may help. Please consult your local pharmacist.
- If you stopped taking iron tablets in preparation for this procedure, you should start to take them again.
- If you have diabetes and take metformin, you may need to stop taking it for 48 hours. We will advise you if this is the case.

### Your results

Images that were taken of your bowel will be reviewed by a consultant radiologist. The results will then be discussed with you at your follow-up outpatient appointment.

### Possible side effects

A CT colonography is a very safe procedure. You should not experience any issues. However, please be aware that you may experience some of the side effects below for 48 hours after the procedure.

- You may feel bloated from the carbon dioxide gas. This feeling should ease within a few hours, as your body absorbs the gas or you pass it from your bottom. Moving around and eating will usually help to ease any discomfort.
- A small perforation (hole in your bowel wall) is a possible, but rare, side effect of CT colonography (1 in 3000 cases). If you suffer from a severe pain or prolonged discomfort in your tummy, chills, fever, or nausea and vomiting, you must telephone **111** or attend the emergency department of your local hospital. Perforations made in this way will usually heal without treatment. However, we may recommend an overnight stay in hospital and antibiotics.

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- A delayed reaction to the intravenous contrast (a substance used to improve how well we see the inside of your body) is a possible, but very rare, side effect. This may cause a rash to appear over the next few days or itching across your whole body. If this happens, phone **111** or speak to a pharmacist.
- If you develop shortness of breath, or your throat or face start to swell, seek urgent medical help.

If you do experience any of these side effects, please let the radiology department know so we can note this on your radiology information system record.

## Contact us

If you would like further medical advice, please contact the radiology department. You can also contact your GP or the NHS helpline, who will be able to help you with any medical problems.

Radiology department: **023 8120 3978** or **023 8120 6077** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm)  
NHS helpline: **111** (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week)

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