

Patient information factsheet

Having a colonic transit study

We have given you this factsheet because you have been referred for a colonic transit study. It explains what a colonic transit study is and what it involves, so you know what to expect. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What is a colonic transit study?

A colonic transit study looks at how well material moves through your large bowel (colon).

For the study, you will need to take six capsules by mouth over a period of three days at home. These capsules contain tiny markers which show up on x-ray (a quick and painless test that takes pictures of the inside of your body using a small amount of radiation).

You will then need to come to the hospital for an x-ray of your tummy (abdomen). The markers inside the capsules allow the radiologist (a doctor specialising in interpreting medical images) to see how your bowel is working and how quickly things are moving through your digestive system.

How should I prepare for the procedure?

Allergies

If you have any allergies and are concerned about taking the capsules, please let us know as soon as you receive your appointment letter.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant or think there is a chance that you might be pregnant, please contact us before your appointment.

Additional support

Please let us know as soon as you receive your appointment letter if you have problems standing or transferring from a wheelchair so that we can arrange appropriate support for you.

Eating and drinking

You should continue to eat and drink as normal throughout the study.

Medication

You should continue to take all your usual medications **except for laxatives** (a type of medication that helps you poo).

Do not take any laxatives during the study. Take your last dose of laxatives the day before you take the first pair of capsules (day 1 of the study) and do not restart them until after you have had the abdominal x-ray at the end of the study (day 5).

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Clothing and jewellery

We may ask you to change into a hospital gown for this procedure.

We may also ask you to remove any jewellery that may interfere with the x-ray images. As a department, we cannot take responsibility if these items are lost or misplaced, so we advise removing all jewellery at home before your appointment.

How do I take the capsules?

We will send you **six** capsules to swallow. These will be labelled as 'Day 1', 'Day 2' and 'Day 3'. Please read the instructions included with the capsules carefully.

Please follow the guidance in the table below for when to take the capsules. If you are unsure about anything, please contact us for advice.

Day of study	Date	Action
Day 1		Take two capsules at breakfast time (9am).
Day 2		Take two capsules at breakfast time (9am).
Day 3		Take two capsules at breakfast time (9am).
Day 4		No action required.
Day 5		Your x-ray appointment.

If for any reason you have **missed** or **been unable to take** any of the capsules, please contact us before coming to hospital for your x-ray appointment. We may need to cancel or reschedule your x-ray for another day.

What will happen on the day of the procedure (day 5)?

On **day 5** of the colonic transit study, you will need to come to the hospital to have an x-ray of your tummy. Please ensure you arrive on time for your appointment (see your appointment letter for more details).

The procedure will be performed by a radiographer (a healthcare professional specialising in medical imaging) in the radiology department.

We will ask you to lie flat on your back on an x-ray table. If you need any additional support to do this, please let us know. We will then take some x-ray images of your tummy. You will need to stay still for a few seconds as we do this so that we can take clear images.

What will happen after the procedure?

You can return to your usual daily activities immediately after the procedure.

You can resume taking any laxative medication that you stopped for the procedure.

Are there any risks?

Radiation

During your procedure, we will use x-rays to see inside your body. The procedure cannot be done without x-rays. All x-rays use a type of ionising radiation which increases your risk of cancer, but for this procedure, the risk is very low.

Your doctor has decided that the benefit to you from the procedure outweighs the very low risk from the radiation. We will not expose you to any more radiation than is absolutely necessary.

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Pregnancy

This procedure involves the use of ionising radiation (x-rays) which although considered safe for you, may be harmful to an unborn baby. As such, we have a legal obligation to check if there is any chance that you may be pregnant. We have to ask this question to anyone who has the potential to become pregnant, regardless of age or circumstances.

When will I receive the results?

We will not be able to give you any results on the day of your x-ray. A radiologist will examine the x-ray images and send a report of their findings to the doctor who referred you for the colonic transit study. This report should be available at your outpatient follow-up appointment.

Further information

Transport

If you are arriving by car, please be advised that our car parks can get very busy, so it's a good idea to allow plenty of time to find a parking space. You may wish to consider getting a lift or coming by public transport.

If you have a medical condition that means you need help getting to and from the hospital, please contact the patient transport service directly on **0300 123 9833**.

Bringing someone with you

We do not advise bringing children with you to your x-ray appointment as they cannot stay with you in the x-ray room and must not be left unattended at any time.

If you do bring children with you, you will need to arrange for a responsible adult to look after them while you have the procedure. Please note that our staff are not able to supervise your children on your behalf. If this causes any difficulties, please contact us to rearrange your appointment using the details below.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns before or after your procedure, please contact the radiology department using the details below.

Radiology department

Telephone: **023 8120 6079** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

If you are unsure as to why you need this procedure, please speak to the doctor or clinical team who referred you.

Useful links

www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/x-ray

If you are a patient at one of our hospitals and need this document translated, or in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **0800 484 0135** or email **PFSH@uhs.nhs.uk**

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**