

## Patient information factsheet

# Having a vascular CT scan

We have given you this factsheet because you have an appointment for a vascular CT scan. It explains what a vascular CT scan is and what to expect at your appointment. Please make sure you read this information and follow the instructions carefully before your appointment. If you have any further questions, please speak to a member of your healthcare team who will be pleased to advise you.

### What is a vascular CT scan?

A computerised tomography (CT) scan is a medical imaging test that uses x-rays and computer software to produce detailed pictures of the inside of the body in cross sections (like slices).

### Before your appointment

It is important that you try to drink about one litre (two pints) of water in the two hours before your scan. This can be water or squash. Please do not eat for two hours before your scan.

You should continue to take your usual medicines.

Please try to arrive 15 minutes before your appointment. Please let us know if you are unable to attend your appointment.

If you require transport to your appointment, please contact us or your GP to arrange it for you.

All children attending the department must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times. Members of staff are unable to look after children for you.

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage to personal property. Please leave any valuables at home.

Please let us know if:

- there is any possibility that you may be pregnant, as we may not be able to do the CT scan.
- you need an interpreter. We are not able to use family members or friends to interpret.

### What to bring with you

You may wish to bring your own dressing gown and reading material.

### On arrival

We may ask you to change into a hospital gown. If so, you may wish to wear your dressing gown over the top before the scan.

We will go through a safety checklist with you before your CT scan.

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With your consent, we will place a cannula (a thin, plastic tube) into a vein in your arm, which we will inject contrast (dye) through during the scan. This makes certain tissues and blood vessels show up more clearly on the images.

## During the scan

After the contrast injection, we will ask you to lie still on the scanner couch while the radiographer takes the CT images.

We will ask you to hold your breath for a few seconds at a time.

The examination will last approximately 20 minutes.

## After the scan

If we have given you an injection of contrast, we will ask you to wait in the department for 20 to 30 minutes after the scan. This is to make sure that you feel well before you leave.

You can eat normally after the scan. We also recommend drinking plenty of fluids.

## Risks

- You will experience some exposure to radiation during the scan. The amount of radiation you will receive is always kept to the minimum amount needed and the radiation risk from the majority of scans is low.
- Some people may have a rare allergic reaction to the contrast (Iomeprol). We will go through a safety checklist before starting the scan to check if you are at increased risk. A hot flush, feeling of passing urine (weeing) and metallic taste are common side effects of the contrast.

## Results

The CT images that we take will be reviewed by a radiologist. We will then discuss the report with you at your follow-up outpatient appointment.

## Useful links

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/ct-scan](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ct-scan)

[www.uhs.nhs.uk/Ourhospitals/SGH/Getting-here-and-parking/ParkingatSouthamptonGeneralHospital/ParkingatSGH.aspx](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/Ourhospitals/SGH/Getting-here-and-parking/ParkingatSouthamptonGeneralHospital/ParkingatSGH.aspx)

## Location of your appointment

C level CT (via main x-ray reception)

C level

Southampton General Hospital

Tremona Road

Southampton

SO16 6YD

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## Contact us

We hope that this factsheet will answer some of the questions you may have, but if there is anything you do not understand or is not covered, please speak to a member of your healthcare team who will be happy to explain further.

If you have any questions before your appointment, please telephone the radiology department on **023 8120 6077**.

For a translation of this document, or a version in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **023 8120 4688**.

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **[www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalneeds](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalneeds)**