



# RB&HH

## SPECIALIST CARE

### Patient information

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## CT Scan (Computerised Tomography)

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### What is a CT scan?

This type of scan uses X-rays and a computer to produce detailed images of many structures inside the body, including the internal organs, blood vessels and bones.

### Preparing for a CT Scan

Before your scan, you may be advised to avoid eating anything for several hours before your appointment, to help ensure that clear images are taken.

Please inform us if you have any allergies or kidney problems, or if you're taking medication for diabetes, because special arrangements may need to be made.

Also, please inform us if you are pregnant. CT scans are not usually recommended for pregnant women unless it is an emergency, as there is a small chance the X-rays could harm unborn babies.

Wear loose comfortable clothes and avoid the use of jewellery and clothes containing metal (such as zips), as these will need to be removed.

### What happens during the Scan?

You will lie on your back on a flatbed that passes into the CT scanner.

The scanner consists of a ring that rotates around a small section of your body as you pass through it. The scanner does not surround your whole body at once, so you shouldn't feel claustrophobic.

The radiographer will operate the scanner from the next room. While the scan is taking place, you'll be able to hear and speak to them through an intercom.

While each scan is taken, you will need to lie very still and breathe normally. This ensures that the scan images are not blurred. You may be asked to breathe in, breathe out, or hold your breath at certain points.

If you have a scan where we need to make the blood vessels easier to see, we may give you an injection.

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### How long does the Scan take?

The scan will usually take around 10–20 minutes.

### After the Scan

You will be able to continue with your normal daily activities after your scan.

If a contrast was used, you may be advised to wait within the centre facilities for up to an hour to make sure you do not have a reaction to it. The contrast is normally completely harmless and will pass out of your body in your urine.

Your scan results will not usually be available immediately. A computer will need to process the information from your scan, which will then be analysed by a radiologist (a specialist in interpreting images of the body).

After analysing the images, the radiologist will write a report and send it to the doctor who referred you for the scan, so they can discuss the results with you.

### People with diabetes

You do not need to change your diet or treatment. Please contact us if you are taking Metformin.

### Should I take my medication?

Please continue to take your medicines as normal. If you would like more information about the medication we may give you during your scan, please contact us or speak to the radiographer before your appointment.

### Is there any risk from the radiation?

The amount of radiation used in this scan is kept to a minimum. We believe that the benefits of the scan far outweigh the risk to your health. If you have concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### Are there any alternatives?

There is no other test that gives as much information on the lung tissue. A magnetic resonance imaging scan may give similar information about abnormalities of the heart and blood vessels, chest wall and abdominal anatomy.

### Getting the Results

A report will be sent to the doctor requesting your scan, which is available the next working day. Your doctor will be able to discuss the results with you at your next appointment.

### Useful Contacts

If you have any questions before your appointment or need any further information, please contact us on 020 7351 8186 or email [diagnosticwimpole@rbht.nhs.uk](mailto:diagnosticwimpole@rbht.nhs.uk)

If you have any concerns about any aspect of the service you have received and feel unable to talk to those people responsible for your care, call PALS on 01895 826 572 or email [pals@rbht.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@rbht.nhs.uk). This is a confidential service.

*This leaflet gives you general information on your CT scan. It does not replace the need for individual advice from a qualified healthcare professional. Please ask if you have any questions.*