



Having a CT scan?

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about having a weight bearing CT scan.

It explains the benefits, risks and alternatives, as well as what you can expect when you come to us. If you have any further questions, please speak to the doctor, nurse or radiographer caring for you.



What is a CT scan?

CT stands for computerised tomography.

A weight bearing CT scan of your feet or ankles takes a series of pictures using x-rays, in standing position. The pictures show cross-sections or slices of your feet and/or ankles in detail. They are put together by a computer and can be viewed on a screen to give a 3-dimensional view. The CT scanner we use is a Cone Beam CT scanner which concentrates X-ray beams in a cone.

What happens during a CT scan?

You will be asked to remove footwear then take a small step up onto the scanner and stand upright. The doors of the scanner will close and the machine rotates around your legs. As it rotates around, the x-ray machine emits thin beams of x-rays through your body, which are detected by the x-ray detectors.

You will need to stand very still while each picture is taken to avoid blurring the images. When you are positioned, the radiographers will retire to the adjacent control room but you will be able to talk to them and they will be watching you through the glass window.

The images are recorded and the radiographer (member of the radiology team trained to carry out scans) will check them briefly to ensure that they are

diagnostic (of good enough quality to be used to make a diagnosis). When this is done, you will be allowed to step off the scanner and leave the scanning room.

Whilst the radiographer can reassure you that the appropriate images have been obtained, they will not be able to give you any idea of the results at that time.

How long will it take?

The initial scan is completed in less than 60 seconds but the total appointment can take up to 15 minutes. This would include any required preparation. Your appointment letter will give you more details. We will try to keep to your appointment time but occasionally we may have delays. We will let you know if this is the case.

Why should I have a weight-bearing CT scan?

A weight-bearing CT scan can help your consultant to find the cause of your problem and the best treatment options for you. The advantage of a weight-bearing scan is that your consultant can see the relationship of the many bones in the feet and ankles in your natural standing position.

What are the risks?

As with x-rays, CT scans use radiation. The level of radiation used is very small and the benefits of the scan are thought to outweigh any risks. Cone-beam CT has a significantly lower radiation dosage than a normal CT scan and is equivalent to an X-Ray set.

If you are, or think you could be, pregnant then you must tell your doctor. We cannot scan women who are pregnant without authorisation from your doctor. Alternatively, contact us at Standing CT on 020 3026 0019, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Are there any alternatives?

Your doctor feels that a CT scan is the best option for you. A standard x-ray will not provide the same level of detail they need to make an informed diagnosis and plan appropriate treatment.

How can I prepare for the scan?

If you are taking any medicines, please continue to take these as usual unless you have been told otherwise by your doctor.

If you need to bring your children with you, please bring along an adult who can supervise them while your scan is being done. We are unable to offer childcare facilities.

What do I need to wear?

You will only be asked to take off your shoes so comfortable shoes that easily come off are helpful.

Will I feel any pain?

You should not feel any pain during the scan itself. The most difficult part is keeping still. Try to relax as much as possible. If you find it uncomfortable to stand still then please tell the radiographer.

What happens after the scan?

In most cases, as soon as the scan is finished you can go home.

When will I get the results?

The results will not be given to you immediately. Your CT pictures will be studied by a radiologist and the results will be sent to the consultant who referred you for the scan. Unfortunately, it will not be possible for you to receive the results at the time of your scan. We can give you access to your images online at a later date should you require them.



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