

Nuclear Medicine

Isotope colonic transit study

What is this leaflet for?

This leaflet will help you get ready for your visit to the Nuclear Medicine Department. Please read the information and call us if you have any questions. We are happy to help.

What is a Colonic Transit study?

A colonic transit study helps doctors understand how well food moves through your large intestine (colon). During the test, you'll be given a drink which contains a radioactive tracer. A special camera is then used to take pictures of your abdomen over several days to see how quickly the tracer moves through your colon.

Please call the department when you get this letter to let us know you can come to your appointment. We can then order the injection needed for your test. If you do not confirm, your appointment will be cancelled.

Telephone: 024 7696 8212

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Please call us as soon as possible if:

- You are pregnant or think you might be pregnant
- You are breastfeeding



Patient Information

- You need any special help
- You will be using ambulance transport for your appointment, and it is after midday
- You don't live in your own private home, like a care home

How should you prepare?

- Stop any laxatives or enemas you are taking on the Saturday before your test.
- Do not eat or drink anything for 4 hours before your first appointment.

Please plan to be at your appointment for 30 minutes.

What will happen when you come for the study?

When you go to your first appointment, you will be asked to have a drink which contains a radioactive tracer. This helps doctors see how the tracer is moving through your colon.

You will then need to return for pictures to be taken each morning for several days.

The dates and times will be given to you in your appointment letter.

What should you do after the drink?

After you have been given the radioactive drink you can leave the hospital, but you should not eat or drink anything for **3 hours**. After this time, you can eat and drink as usual.

What happens when the pictures are taken?

You will not need to take off your clothes, but we will ask you to remove any metal objects you are carrying or wearing around your abdomen. Two location markers will be placed on either side of your waist each day and removed before you leave. These let the doctors see the radioactive drink moving through your body.

Patient Information

The picture will be taken with you lying on a bed. The special camera, called a gamma camera will come close to you but it will not touch you. You will need to keep as still as possible, but you can breathe normally. These pictures will take about 15 minutes each day.

What happens after the scan?

You will be asked to wait for a few minutes whilst your images are checked. Once this is done you can leave. Please note we cannot discuss the results with you. The doctor who requested the test will usually get the results within 10 working days.

What else do you need to know?

As part of your study, you will be given an unlicensed medicine.

In the UK, medicines are approved by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). They check medicines are safe, work well and are of good quality. An unlicensed medicine is any medicine used without full approval from the MHRA. This could mean using a medicine for another use different to its usual purpose or using a medicine approved in another country.

You have been prescribed an unlicensed medicine because there is not a fully approved alternative available. Your doctors have thought carefully about giving you this medicine to make sure it's the best option for you, and they will monitor you closely to make sure it is safe.

Should you have any concerns about the study you have been booked in for, please do not hesitate to contact the department using the details below or your consultant.

How much radiation will you receive?

This examination exposes you to ionising radiation. The amount of radiation is 1.9 mSv(millisievert). 1.9 mSv is about the same amount of natural radiation you get living in the UK for 255 days.

Your doctor has recommended this scan because the benefit outweighs the very low risk of harm. The risk of getting cancer because of this

Patient Information

radiation is around 19 in 2000 people. This is very small compared with the 1 in 2 risk of someone getting cancer naturally in their lifetime.

Directions and car parking

The Nuclear Medicine department is a short walk from the main entrance on the ground floor. When you enter the hospital through the main entrance, turn left to go into the West wing. Follow the signs for X-ray along the corridor, and you'll find X-ray on the left, just after the Fracture Clinic. Go to the X-ray reception and walk straight ahead. Follow signs for Nuclear Medicine. You will go through the double doors and enter the main reception area of the department.

There is parking available for patients and visitors, but spaces can be limited, so it is a good idea to arrive early. There is a charge for parking, and automatic number plate recognition systems are in use. For more details about directions, parking charges, and site maps, visit the trust website at (www.uhcw.nhs.uk).

Facilities available in the hospital

- Chilled water dispenser in the department.
- Costa Coffee, M&S and WHSmith in the main reception area.
- Three hospital restaurants.

What if you still have questions?

If you have any questions or concerns, we're here to help. Call the person who referred you for this treatment or call Nuclear Medicine.

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

Phone: 024 7696 8212

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 8212 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

Patient Information

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This will help us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.



Have your say. Scan the QR code or visit:

www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback

Document History

Department: Nuclear Medicine

Contact: 28212

Updated: January 2025

Review: January 2027

Version: 3

Reference: HIC/LFT/2378/19