

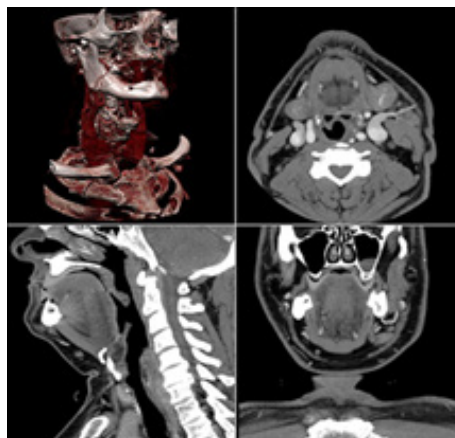
Services

As we currently do not offer CT at this site, patients who require these types of scans are referred to one of the following hospitals: Princess Royal Hospital at Haywards Heath, Spire Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Fordcombe or Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury.

How does computed tomography work?

CT works using x-rays. The scanner looks like a giant doughnut. The table top moves and you pass through the hole. Inside the machine, there are a row of detectors opposite the x-ray tube (which produces the x-rays). These spin very fast inside the machine and make a swishing noise which is quite loud.

As you move through the hole in the scanner, the x-rays pass through you and are absorbed/weakened by the tissues in the body. How weak the x-rays are when they reach the detectors will vary according to whether they have passed through bone, muscle, organs, etc. The resultant radiation is collected by the detectors and the images are created. Because the detectors and x-rays are rotating as you pass through, we are able to see your body as slices but can also create 3D images of the body from the data gathered during the scan.



The scan itself normally takes just a few minutes. More specialised procedures using CT may take up to 30 minutes (CT guided biopsy or CT colonography).

For some scans, particularly those of the trunk, or arteries, we give an injection of x-ray dye which helps highlight the organs and blood vessels within the body. We have to make sure your kidney function is normal before this, so we may ask you to have a blood test. Please let the radiographer know if you have kidney impairment or are on dialysis.

The dye may give you a hot flushing sensation, it may give you a metallic taste or you may experience a sensation like you have wet yourself (you will not wet yourself and the sensation passes quickly). These feelings are nothing to worry about and wear off quickly.

The dye will come out of your body in your urine. We encourage you to drink extra fluids for the remainder of the day to help to get rid of it from your body. It will not change the colour of your urine.

Are CT scans suitable for all patients?

Everyone can have CT, there are no exclusions. However, because CT uses x-rays, CT of the abdomen is not normally recommended in pregnancy unless the mother's life is at risk (i.e. due to major trauma or a life threatening condition).

Breast feeding after injection of dye is safe according to the Royal College of Radiologists. They advise breast feeding mothers that there is an extremely small amount of the injected contrast medium which may enter breast milk. The infant is unlikely to ingest any from their gut; therefore, there is no need to cease breastfeeding.

Contact details

Should you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Feedback about this leaflet would be appreciated

Radiology Department

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CT (Computed Tomography) Scan

Radiology Services at Queen Victoria Hospital (QVH)

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would like this leaflet
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different format.

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