

An orthopaedic specialist has requested that you have an arthrogram of one of your joints. This involves injecting fluid into your joint and taking detailed images of the inside of your joint. This gives us additional useful information (e.g. tears of soft tissue structures within the joint) that we cannot get from a scan on its own.

Please note: you should not drive yourself home after the procedure.

There are two stages to the test:

1) Joint injection. This takes place in a room with an X ray or Ultrasound machine. The injection itself usually only takes a few minutes, however, you may be in the room for 15-20 minutes. You will meet the radiologist or radiographer and have the opportunity to ask any questions.

The radiographer or radiologist will ask you to lie on an X ray or ultrasound table and expose the area around the joint. They will clean the skin, and use a local anaesthetic to numb the area. This will initially feel sharp and will sting for a few moments. They then pass a fine needle into the joint using X ray or ultrasound guidance, and inject some fluid (contrast medium – dye) to check the needle is successfully in the joint, and to distend the joint itself. We will then transfer you to the CT scanner on a chair or trolley for the second part of the test.

2) CT scan

CT stands for computerised tomography.

A CT scan takes a series of pictures of your body using X-rays. The pictures show cross-sections or slices of your body. They are put together by a computer and we can view them on a screen.

The scan shows a very detailed image of the inside of your body.

A Radiographer will perform the scan.

What does the scan involve?

The scanner is like a large doughnut and unlike some other scanning machines the CT scanner is not enclosed.

All you have to do is lie still on the couch. The couch moves backwards and forwards through a large circular opening to allow pictures to be taken of different parts of the body.

How long does the scan last?

The scan can take up to 30 minutes however the overall examination may take up to 2 hours.

You can leave immediately after the CT Scan.

Diabetes

If you are diabetic, continue taking any medication as usual.

Female Patients

If you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant please contact the department (see contact details on the back page).

If you are breastfeeding please contact the department as you may need an injection of contrast agent (dye) which means you will be unable to breastfeed for a period of time after your,CT scan usually 24 hours.

Do I need to prepare?

No. There is no special preparation.

You can eat and drink as normal and take any prescribed medicines, unless your doctor tells you otherwise.

We may ask you to change into a hospital gown. We may ask you to remove dentures, jewellery, hearing aids, hairpins and eye makeup.

What are the risks or complications?

It is not uncommon to have a little bruising at the site of the injection and the area may be slightly tender or stiff for a day or so. Any adverse reaction to the injected anaesthetic or fluid is very rare. However, if this was to happen it would occur immediately (while you are still with the doctor).

There is a slight risk of infection of the joint (studies quote around 1 in 1000 chance) and we take appropriate action to minimise this risk. If infection was to occur, this is usually a few days after the procedure. The joint would become more painful than usual, you might find your movements are limited, and the area can become hot and inflamed. You may also feel generally unwell and feverish. **If you think the joint is infected then you should attend your local Accident and Emergency department or GP immediately or contact NHS 24 and explain that you have had a CT arthrogram.**

After the procedure

You should not drive home after the procedure and must make other travel arrangements (e.g. ask a relative or friend to accompany you who can drive you home). After the procedure the joint will feel slightly unusual until the body has drained away all the injected fluid. We recommend that you do not drive or exercise for 24 hours after the procedure.

When will I know the results?

A radiologist (a specialised doctor) will review your scans and send the results to the person who referred you for the test. Your referrer will make arrangements to tell you the result.

Any other questions?

Please ask a member of the team in the Imaging Department.

Your appointment

Please

- Do not bring any valuables with you
- Call us if you need advice

If you can't make this appointment please tell us as soon as possible – we can arrange another appointment and give your appointment to another patient.

Contact Centre Telephone Number

0141 347 8379

www.nhsgg.org.uk