

Patient information

CT Arthrogram Appointment Details

Imaging Department

Please note that this is a two-part test.

Please read this entire letter thoroughly.

Your hospital doctor has advised that you need a CT Arthrogram.

Any alternative treatments or procedures will have been discussed at your initial consultation with your referring practitioner.

Please arrive for your appointment at the main X-ray department.

On arrival to the main X-ray department, you may be taken to the CT scanner for a CT scan prior to the arthrogram.

Don't worry as this can be normal as the X-ray doctor (radiologist) may not have seen your case notes or previous scans prior to your appointment.

What is a CT Arthrogram?

A CT Arthrogram is an X-ray examination of one of your joints using a colourless fluid known as an X-ray contrast agent, or dye. Many different joints can be examined, for example your shoulder, elbow, knee and ankle.

Dye is injected into your joint to highlight parts of your joints which will show up on the CT scan. The dye injection is carried out by a Radiologist (a doctor who specialises in X-rays).

What anaesthetic will I be given?

The skin over the joint that needs to be examined will be cleaned and a local anaesthetic will be injected into the area to numb the skin and the tissue under it.

Local anaesthetic is drug-induced numbness: it may be provided by an anaesthetist, surgeon or other healthcare professional, depending on the technique used. Like all medicines, local anaesthetics may sometimes cause side effects, as well as the effects that are needed. You may experience dizziness, blurred vision, drowsiness and occasionally loss of consciousness.

Serious side effects are rare, and include fits, low blood pressure, slowed breathing and changes in heartbeat, which may be life-threatening. If you have any concerns about any of these effects, you should discuss them with your doctor.

If you have sedation, the drugs used in sedation may affect your memory or concentration for up to 24 hours. Many patients remember nothing about the procedure or even what the doctor has said to them afterwards.

If you are worried about any of these risks, please speak to your Doctor or a member of their team.

What is a CT scan?

CT stands for Computerised Tomography. It is a powerful computer linked to an X-ray machine, which produces special pictures of most parts of the body.

What are the risks of having a CT scan?

Every day we are all exposed to natural radiation such as from the sun. Like an X-ray, CT involves a small extra dose, but every effort is made to keep the dose as small as possible. However, even this small amount may be harmful to an unborn child.

If you think that there is a chance you may be pregnant, please contact the CT Department on Tel: 0151 706 2759 before your appointment.

If you are worried about any of these risks, please speak to your Consultant or a member of their team.

What are the benefits of having a CT scan?

CT provides very detailed pictures, which can help make the direct diagnosis. A CT scan is very similar to having a normal X-ray.

Before your examination

There is no need for any special preparation for this examination. You should eat and drink normally.

Part 1: Arthrogram

On arrival to the department you will be asked to change into a gown. Don't worry as you will be given a dressing gown to cover you up completely. Your belongings will remain with you throughout both parts of the test.

You will be escorted into the X-ray room and be asked to lie on the X-ray table. The skin over the joint that needs to be examined will be cleaned and a local anaesthetic will be injected into the area to numb the skin and the tissue under it.

When the skin is numb a fine needle will be placed into your joint and a colourless fluid known as an X-ray contrast agent, or dye contrast agent (dye) will be injected while the Radiologist watches on a TV monitor.

The needle is removed and you will be asked to gently exercise the joint so that the whole of the joint is coated with the contrast agent.

When this first part of the examination is complete, a small plaster will be placed over the puncture site.

You and your belongings will now be taken around to the CT scanner for the second part of the test.

Part 2: CT Scan

You will be asked to lie on a table, which will then be moved by a radiographer into the CT scanner. The CT scanner is a wide ring, a bit like a giant Polo mint.

While the pictures are being taken the radiographer will be able to see you and you will be able to speak to each other if you need to.

Usually a scan takes about 10-20 minutes but you can expect to be in the CT department for up to 30 mins.

After your scan

There are no after effects from this examination. But remember due to the arthrogram injection, a little discomfort may be noticed in the joint for one to two days after the examination and any strenuous exercise should be avoided for two days.

Results

The results will not be available on the day of your scan. There is a lot of information on the scan pictures, which will need to be studied by the radiologist (doctor).

Your results are sent to the doctor who asked for this test to be carried out. This is usually a hospital doctor.

Cancellations

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please let us know as soon as possible and we will arrange another for you.

If you fail to cancel and do not attend you will be discharged back to the care of the referring clinician.

Transport

If your medical condition or mobility needs mean that you cannot get to your appointment any other way and you require transport you should ring the Patient Transport Services (PTS) who will arrange one for you.

Tel: 0151 706 4676

Car parking

Car parking for visitors and patients is available at the Q-Park multi-storey car park. Vehicle entry to the car park is on Epworth Street which is off Erskine Street. The car park is open 24 hours a day seven days a week and charges apply. The car park is continually monitored by CCTV and parking attendants.

There are disabled spaces located throughout the car park. If you require help with parking ask a parking host at the car park entrance. There is a bus shuttle service for patients with mobility problems which operates Monday to Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm from Q-Park to the Royal Liverpool University Hospital.

Please attend the Radiology department located on the ground floor of the main hospital building. Please bring this letter when you attend.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further Information

If you have any further questions, or require further information, please contact:

The Appointments Office
Tel: 0151 706 2759

NHS 111 Service
Tel: 111

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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