



ARTHUR ultrasound scan

This leaflet explains what an ARTHUR ultrasound scan is, why you have been offered one and what to expect during and after the scan.

What is an ARTHUR scan?

ARTHUR is a special ultrasound scanner that uses advanced technology, including robotics, to take detailed images of your joints, such as your hands and wrists.

It helps your doctor and rheumatology team to:

- Diagnose arthritis earlier
- Monitor inflammation in your joints
- Decide the best treatment for you

The scan is safe, painless, and does not use radiation.

Why have I been offered this scan?

You have been offered this scan because:

- You may have inflammatory arthritis, or
- Your doctor wants to check how your condition is changing

This scan allows us to assess your joints quickly and accurately before, during or outside your clinic visits.

What is different about ARTHUR?

Unlike a traditional ultrasound:

- The machine performs the scan automatically using robotic ultrasound technology
- It takes images of several joints in a standardised way, using an artificial intelligence (AI) technology – this helps ensure consistent, high-quality imaging for every patient
- Your doctor and rheumatology team will still review all the results

What happens during the scan?

1. You will be asked to sit comfortably beside the scanner
2. You will place your hands into the scanning area
3. Gel will be applied on your hands for the scan (this can feel cool)
4. The scanner will gently move into position, touching your skin with a steady pressure and will take images

The scan takes around 20-25 minutes.

A member of staff will be around at all times to assist or if you have any questions.

Will it hurt?

No, the scan is:

- Painless
- Non-invasive
- Comfortable for most patients – you will be advised to keep your hand in a normal, relaxed position (not stretching your fingers) – you can let us know at any time if you feel too uncomfortable and the staff will stop the scan.

Are there any risks?

The scan is very safe.

Possible minor issues include:

- Slight discomfort from positioning your hands
- Cool sensation from the gel

There are no known serious risks.

What happens after the scan?

- The gel will be wiped off
- The images will be reviewed by your doctor and rheumatology team
- Your results will be discussed with you during or outside your appointment
- Your treatment plan may be adjusted based on the findings of the scan

Do I have to have this scan?

No, the scan is entirely your choice.

If you decide not to have it:

- Your care will continue
- Your doctor and rheumatology team will discuss alternative options with you

How will my information be used?

- Your scan results will be stored securely in your medical record
- They will be used for your care and treatment
- We may use anonymous, non-identifiable data for research or auditing purposes
- Your personal data will be kept confidential in line with NHS policies

Questions or concerns?

If you have any questions, please speak to:

The clinic team on the day, or contact the Rheumatology Team.

Summary

The ARTHUR scan:

- Is quick and safe
- Helps diagnose and monitor arthritis

- Can be performed before or during your clinic visits
- Helps your doctor and the Rheumatology Team to interpret the results in order to improve your care

Useful contacts

Rheumatology Department 0118 3227969

Rheumatology Advice Line 0118 3226574

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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