

Having a CT or MRI scan

If you are ill or hurt your doctor (GP) may want you to have a scan – this is a photograph of the inside of your body.



You will get a letter in the post telling you when to come for your scan.



There are two main types of scans – CT scans and MRI scans. Both scanners are in the X-ray department.

This is what a scanner looks like.



Having a scan – Easy Read

Some people will have a general anaesthetic before they go for a scan - this means you will be given a medicine to send you to sleep. More information about this can be found in the leaflet called 'Having a general anaesthetic'.



This leaflet is about having a scan while you are awake.



When you arrive at the X-ray department, the receptionist will ask you your name and your birthday to make sure it is you.



All the staff in the hospital wear a name badge and when they speak to you, they should always tell you their name.



Having a scan – Easy Read

For an MRI scan you can pick a choice of music from the music list or bring in your favourite CD.

Once your music is picked you will be asked to wait in a special area called the waiting room.



When the person doing the scan is ready for you, he or she may ask you to get changed into a hospital gown before going into the scanning room.



If you are having an MRI scan, you will need to take off all of your jewellery including your watch.

It is important to empty your pockets if you are carrying anything metal. This is because the MRI scan machine does not like metal objects and can break them.

After the scan you can put them back on.



Having a scan – Easy Read

The person doing your scan will then take you straight into the scanning room.

Here is a picture of the new MRI scanning room. You can pick the colour of the lights.



This is a picture of the CT scanner. The person doing the scan will then ask you to lie down on a table and might put a strap across you to hold you in one position during the scan.



You may need to have a small plastic tube in your arm for a dye injection to make the pictures clearer.

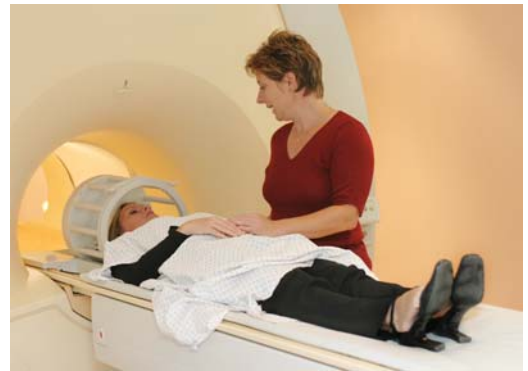


If you are having an MRI scan, it is very noisy so you will be given some headphones so you can listen to music.



Having a scan – Easy Read

Whether you are having a CT or an MRI scan, you will be asked to lie very still while the table moves through a big hoop or tunnel (which is where the camera is).



It doesn't hurt and nothing touches you but the scanner will make a noise.



The person doing the scan will be able to talk to you through your headphones while the scan is happening.



If you are frightened and want to stop, you can press a button or raise your hand.

Your carer or friend can usually stay near you during the scan.



Having a scan – Easy Read

Some people don't like the feeling of being in the tunnel (MRI scan) so it is best to close your eyes and listen to the music.



If you are too frightened, the person doing the scan may decide you are best to come back another time and have the scan while you are asleep.

We have a leaflet about this called 'Having a general anaesthetic'.



When the scan is finished, the nurse will remove the strap and you can get up, put your jewellery back on and leave.



The results of the scan will be looked at by your doctor who will decide what treatment you need, if any.



If you or your carer needs help while you are in the hospital, ask one of the nurses to either call the Learning Disability Co-ordinator on ext 8159 or PALS on ext 8338.



More information for people with learning disabilities and their carers can be found on the Trust website at: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk



Also available in this series:

- Getting help in hospital
- Going into hospital
- Going to the Acute Medical Unit (AMU)
- Going to the Accident & Emergency Department (A&E)
- Having a blood test
- Having a general anaesthetic
- Having an X-ray
- Washing your hands
- What happens in pre-operative assessment



Easy Read booklet number 4. Images courtesy of PhotoSymbols, the Change Picture Bank and RBFT. January 2015.