
Your doctor has recommended you have an X-ray to investigate a potential problem.

This leaflet explains what happens when you come into the X-ray Department. It is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor. If you have any questions please ask a member of staff.

What is an X-ray?

An X-ray is a picture of the internal structures of the body. It is produced by exposure to a controlled source of X-rays and is generally stored and displayed in digital form, shown on a computer screen.

Are there any risks?

There are risks involved with X-rays but a straightforward X-ray uses only a small amount of radiation and your doctor feels this X-ray is a necessary investigation. This is equivalent to the amount of radiation which we all receive from the atmosphere over two or three days.

Do I need to make any special preparations?

No. However, please let us know if you have had a similar X-ray very recently or if

you are a woman who is, or might be, pregnant.

Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, you can bring a friend or relative but for reasons of safety, they cannot accompany you into the examination room, except in exceptional circumstances or in the case of young children under the age of ten. (Those who need to accompany patients (e.g. carers, interpreters) will need to go behind a protective screen when the X-rays are taken.)



What happens when I arrive?

Check in at the reception desk in the X-ray (Radiology) Department. The receptionist or care assistant will take your X-ray request form and direct you to a waiting area. A radiographer or another member of staff will call you to an examination room when they are ready to start your X-ray.

If you need to undress for the procedure, you will first be shown to a private cubicle to change into the hospital gown provided. Please keep any valuables with you.

What happens during the X-ray?

You will be taken into the X-ray room where you will be asked to stand against a frame, sit on a chair, or lie on the X-ray table (depending on which part of your body is being X-rayed).

The radiographer will confirm your name, address and birth date. He or she will then explain the procedure to you and will position you and give you instructions in order to take the images. You will be asked to keep still and sometimes to take a deep breath in and to hold it for a few seconds.

Although the radiographer will go behind a screen, you will be seen and heard at all times. X-rays are not uncomfortable or painful.



How long will it take?

The process of taking the image will only last a few minutes but the radiographer may need to take further X-rays in different positions, depending on the body part and the complexity of the images requested by your doctor.

Waiting times for X-rays will vary, depending on the number of clinics running and GP referrals attending when you arrive. Not all examinations can be done in every room which may also affect your waiting time.

When will I get the results?

The radiographer will not be able to give you any results at the time of the procedure. The X-ray images will be examined by the radiologist (X-ray doctor) after your visit. A written report on the findings will be sent to your referring doctor – normally available in around 5 working days. The majority of reports are sent electronically.

And finally...

We hope most of your questions will have been answered in this leaflet. If there is anything you don't understand or if you have any further questions or concerns please ask your doctor.

Our services – X-Ray

Royal Berkshire Hospital

Walk-in service

Monday-Friday, 7.30am–4.30pm

Queries: 0118 322 7991

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West Berkshire Community Hospital

Walk-in service

Monday-Friday, 9am–3.30pm

Queries: 01635 273380

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Royal Berkshire Bracknell Healthspace

Appointment only

Contact 01344 662928

Monday–Sunday, appointments vary

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Townlands Memorial Hospital

Appointment only

Contact 01865 903086

Monday–Friday, appointments vary

For more information about the Trust, visit our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and large print upon request

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Royal Berkshire
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Radiology (X-ray) Department



What happens when
I have an X-ray?

Information for patients