

Patient guide to x-rays



Some common questions about x-rays

What is an x-ray?

An x-ray is a simple and painless test that takes detailed pictures of the inside of your body. X-rays are a form of radiation energy able to pass through human tissue. The x-ray machine uses a tube to produce an x-ray beam which is carefully aimed on the part of the body being examined.

Are x-rays safe?

The dose of radiation from a standard x-ray is the same amount of radiation that the average person receives from 10 days of naturally occurring background radiation. Your doctor has referred you for an x-ray having fully considered the risks and benefits.

What are the limitations of x-rays?

Standard x-rays do not always show the full extent of diseases, especially those of the soft tissues, and doctors may ask for more detailed scans (for example, MRI and CT scans). Please see our website for more information about MRI and CT scans.

How do I prepare for my scan?

You don't need to do anything special to prepare for your scan. On the day of your appointment you will need to arrive about 15 minutes before your appointment time.

What can I expect during my examination?

We may ask you to change into a gown and to remove anything you are wearing that has metal in it (for example, glasses, jewellery and watches).

Next, we will take you into the x-ray suite and, depending on the type of x-ray you are going to have, we may ask you to lie on a table, sit or stand.

Once you are in position, the radiographer will stand behind a screen and may ask you to hold your breath. Holding your breath is very important because the movement of the lungs during regular breathing can blur the images.

The radiographer may ask you to change position to allow them to take images from different viewpoints.

After the x-rays have been taken, the radiographer will look at them briefly to make sure that they don't need to take any more images. We will then ask you to change back into your clothes.

How long will it take?

Generally speaking, your x-ray should take no more than five to 10 minutes.

What happens after my x-ray?

You may eat and drink as usual and return to your daily routine straight away.

How do I get my results?

After your scan, our radiographer will give you a CD to take away, containing your images. (We do not usually issue CDs for non-private patients, unless the

doctor or consultant who referred you has asked us to.)

A radiologist will write a report and send it to the doctor or consultant who referred you, usually within 48 hours.

You will need to arrange an appointment to discuss your report with the doctor or consultant who referred you for the scan.

Your report will contain a summary of the radiologist's findings and their recommendations for further follow-up.

Any other questions?

If you have any other questions, worries or doubts do not hesitate to ask one of our staff. We want you to feel as comfortable as possible.

We are committed to providing clean, safe premises for our clients in line with the Health and Social Care Act 2008 - Code of Practice on the Prevention and Control of Infections and related guidance (December 2010) and all other Department of Health guidance.

For more information about the diagnostic centre that you will be visiting, including contact details and directions on how to get there, please visit our website at www.umediagnostics.com