

## Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Department

### This leaflet explains: **Having a CT scan**

#### **What is a CT scan?**

Computerised tomography (CT) is a method of building up a detailed picture of your body and its organs. It uses X-ray radiation to build up the pictures.

#### **How long will the CT scan take?**

It usually takes around 30 minutes to scan one part of your body. It will obviously take a little longer to scan more than one part. The length of the scan also varies depending upon the problem that your doctor is trying to find out more about. It is important to remember that just because the scan takes a little longer it does not necessarily mean that there is something wrong.

#### **Can I eat or drink?**

You may eat, drink and continue to take any medication prior to your CT scan. If you are having a scan of your tummy you may be asked to starve for four hours before your scan.

#### **Will I need an injection?**

Some patients may need an injection to improve the quality of the scan. In most patients the injection is given in a vein in your elbow (the same place as a blood test). The injection should have no after effects.

#### **Does it hurt?**

No it does not hurt. A CT scan is painless but you must be able to keep very still and lie quite flat. The CT scanner is like a tunnel and some people do feel claustrophobic.

#### **Is there anything else I need to know?**

It takes a long time to look at all the pictures that your scan produces and so the report will not be available for several days. You will be sent an appointment to be reviewed in the outpatient department to discuss the findings of your scan and any further treatment that might be necessary.

**Adapted from the British Association Of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (BAOMS) Available online at [www.baoms.org.uk](http://www.baoms.org.uk)**