

Having an X-ray

Information for Patients

In this leaflet:

Introduction	2
What is an X-Ray?	2
Are there any risks?	2
What do I need to do before my x-ray?	3
Where do I go when I arrive at the hospital?	3
Can I bring a relative or friend?	3
What happens during the procedure?	3
What happens after the x-ray?	4
How do I get my results?	4
Any questions?	4
More information	4
How do I make a comment about my examination?	4

Introduction

This leaflet tells you about having an x-ray. It explains how the test is done, what to expect, and what the possible risks are.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is an X-ray?

An X-ray test is a quick and painless way for doctors to diagnose and monitor many health conditions. An x-ray machine generates a small dose of x-rays to produce pictures of the organs and other structures inside the body, which can be viewed on a computer monitor.

X-ray tests are frequently used to assess bones and joints for injury and arthritis. A chest X-ray is part of the routine assessment of heart and lung problems. It may also form part of an assessment prior to a general anaesthetic. Abdominal X-rays can be useful for identifying kidney stones.

Are there any risks?

X-rays are of a type of radiation known as ionising radiation. The dose that you get from a medical x-ray is very low and the associated risks are minimal. They are similar in strength to other sources of natural radiation that people are exposed to everyday without even realising it. The radiographer is responsible for making sure that your dose is kept as low as possible and that the benefits of having the x-ray outweigh any risk.

What do I need to do before my X-ray?

There is no specific preparation for an X-ray. You should continue to take your medications as normal.

Females

Radiation can be harmful for an unborn baby. Females are asked to contact the Radiology department if you suspect that you may be pregnant OR if the appointment is more than 10 days after the start of your last period. When you arrive for your test, you will be asked when your last period started. If it is more than 10 days earlier, your appointment will be postponed.

Where do I go when I arrive at the hospital?

Please report to the reception desk in the Radiology main department (B7) or community site where you have been sent.

Please click on the following link for a site map of the main hospital site at the RUH:

http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/finding/documents/RUH_directory_map.pdf

You will be asked to sit in the waiting area until called by a member of staff. A member of the team will explain the test and answer any questions.

You should wear clothing that allows easy access to the area that is being examined. If you have to undress for the procedure, you will be shown to a private cubicle and asked to change into a clean gown. You will be asked to remove all jewellery and metal from the area to be imaged. Your clothes and valuables will be secured in the cubicle until after the procedure.

Please let us know when you arrive if you feel you need any assistance.

Can I bring a relative or friend?

You may bring a relative or friend with you to the appointment but, as the examination uses x-rays, for reasons of safety they will not be able to accompany you into the examination room, except in very special circumstances.

If you need an interpreter or a chaperone, please tell us in advance of your attendance so that we can arrange this.

What happens during the procedure?

You will be taken into the X-Ray Room and asked to sit or stand in front of the detector, or lie down on the x-ray table. The area to be examined is exposed while the rest of the body is covered. The lighting in the room is usually dimmed.

The Radiographer will go behind a screen to make the x-ray exposure. You will be asked to stay still and sometimes to take a deep breath in and hold it for a few seconds.



You may be asked to move into different positions for other X-ray views. Holding a position or lying on the x-ray table may, for some people, feel uncomfortable, but the X-ray itself is painless.

Depending on the examination, you will be in the x-ray room for 5-15 minutes.

What happens after the X-ray?

The radiographer may ask you to wait in the department while they check that no more x-ray images are required. As soon as the radiographer is satisfied that no more x-rays are needed you will be free to dress and leave the department.

How do I get my results?

A Radiologist (X-ray doctor) or Radiographer who is trained to interpret X-rays will review your images on the computer monitor and send a report to your doctor. Your GP or hospital Consultant who referred you for the test will see you to discuss the results.

Any questions?

We will do our best to make your visit as comfortable and stress free as possible. If you have any questions or suggestions for us, please contact Main Radiology reception on 01225 824358.

More information

For general information about Radiology departments, visit The Royal College of Radiologists' website: <https://www.rcr.ac.uk/public-and-media/what-expect-when>

For information about the effects of x-rays read the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) publication: 'X-rays how safe are they?' on the website: http://www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1194947388410

How do I make a comment about my examination?

If you have any concerns or suggestions following your examination, please contact the [Patient Advice and Liaison Service \(PALS\)](#),
Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust, Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG.
Email: ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net
Tel: 01225 821655 or 01225 826319