

Having an injection of contrast for your Radiotherapy Planning Scan

Why do I need to have an injection of contrast for my radiotherapy planning scan?

Your doctor has requested that you have an injection of a contrast liquid to provide clearer images for planning your Radiotherapy treatment. Your doctor should have discussed this with you during the consent process and may have asked you to go for a blood test before your planning appointment.

Before your CT planning appointment

It is very important that you are well hydrated; a couple of days before your CT appointment please increase your daily fluid intake. Ideally we would like you to drink 1 ½-2 litres of water or non-caffeinated drinks over the course of each day.

At the CT planning appointment

Before the procedure a radiographer will assess your suitability for having this injection by completing a questionnaire with you. The contrast will be administered through a cannula (a fine tube) which is inserted into a vein in the hand or arm.

Sensations you may experience during the scan

Using contrast does not normally cause problems for people; however, some people can experience side effects. The most common sensations people experience are: a warm or hot flush; a metallic taste and/or a feeling of needing to empty their bladder, these usually pass quickly. Tell the radiographers immediately of any other sensations/symptoms you experience.

On rare occasions some people can suffer from allergic reactions during or shortly after the scan. A very small percentage of people may develop a delayed reaction with a rash. You will be given a leaflet after the scan with details of the injection you have had, should a delayed reaction occur and you seek medical advice please take this information with you.



Alternatives

It is not always possible to use a contrast injection for medical reasons, or if access to your veins is not successful. In this situation the CT scan will be performed without contrast.

Appointment length

We would advise you to allow a total of 2 hours for this appointment although it may be quicker than this.

Following the injection

After the injection, the cannula will need to remain in place for 15-30 minutes. If you feel unwell or develop any symptoms please report to a member of staff and tell them you have had a contrast injection.

Please ensure you remain well hydrated for a few days after your scan.

If you feel unwell or develop any symptoms once you have left the hospital including signs of an allergic reaction you must contact your GP or local emergency (A&E) or urgent treatment centre and inform them you have had an injection of contrast. If you require hospital transport you will need to contact the appropriate number below (based on the location of your GP)

Radiotherapy department contact details

Telephone: 01225 824853

Monday-Friday 8am-3:30pm

Website: www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/radiotherapy

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG
01225 428331 www.ruh.nhs.uk

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.