

Patient information leaflet

Tubogram

Radiology department

Introduction

We hope this guide will answer your questions about your tubogram procedure. Please contact the team if you require further information via the details at the end of this leaflet.

What is a tubogram procedure?

A tubogram is a straightforward procedure performed in the x-ray department to check the position of a line that you have had inserted previously (e.g. a biliary drain or a nephrostomy). Contrast medium (x-ray dye) is injected into the line so it becomes easily visible, and x-rays are taken of the line to record whether or not it is in the correct place.

Who will be doing the tubogram?

The examination is carried out by a Consultant Radiologist (special x-ray doctor), a radiographer (person who takes the x-ray images) and the radiology nursing team.

Are there any risks?

X-ray radiation: All x-ray procedures involve exposure to radiation in varying amounts. The dose you get from a medical x-ray is very low and your doctor has determined that the benefits of having the examination outweigh potential risks.

The radiographer is present throughout your test making sure that the dose is kept as low as reasonably possible and the duration and level of x-rays are kept to a minimum.

Contrast medium: A very small number of patients have an allergic reaction to the contrast medium (x-ray dye). This can be minor, severe, or even life threatening but the chances of this occurring are very rare. If you get an itchy rash or difficulty breathing during the procedure tell a member of staff, the team will provide appropriate treatment.

Before your examination begins the radiographer will ask you a series of questions about your medical history, including any allergies you may have. This will help us assess if you are at risk of an allergic reaction to the x-ray dye.

Patients aged 12 to 55, could you be pregnant? X-rays can be harmful to an unborn baby and should be avoided by patients who are or may be pregnant.

It is recommended that the examination is performed within 10 days of the first day of your menstrual period.

If your appointment is not within this time or if you think you may be pregnant, please contact the X-ray department before your appointment. 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 may be postponed.

Breastfeeding: On the day of your examination, the procedure involves an injection of iodine contrast medium (x-ray dye) into the line that is being checked. These agents are low risk contrast agents.

No special precautions are required and you can carry on breastfeeding as normal. However, if you have any concerns you may want to express some breast milk prior to your appointment.

Preparation for a tubogram.

There are no special preparations for this examination. You may eat and drink as normal and take any regular medications as usual.

Please leave any jewellery or valuables at home.

Please contact the booking team before your appointment if:

- you are or think you may be pregnant
- If you have had a previous allergic reaction to x-ray dye (contrast agent) or are allergic to iodine.
- If you weigh over 30 stone/190 kilograms
- If you plan on using hospital transport or need a hoist to transfer
- If you require an interpreter – please inform us as soon as you receive your appointment letter, and we will arrange an interpreter for you.

If you are unsure or have questions about your preparation, contact your doctor or the X-ray department for advice.

Allergies

If you have any allergies you must inform your doctor. If you have previously reacted to contrast medium (x-ray dye) you must tell your doctor about this.

Medication

Please continue to take all usual medication.

Getting to us

When attending The Princess Alexandra Hospital (Hamstel Road, Harlow, Essex, CM20 1QX), follow the signage to the radiology reception, which is located on the ground floor, green zone.

Please let the receptionists know that you have arrived for your appointment.

When should I arrive?

Please arrive in the radiology department at your given appointment time. A notification through text or letter should have been sent to you to confirm this appointment.

Can someone stay with me in the hospital?

You may have a friend or relative attend with you, but they will be asked to stay in the waiting area while you have your procedure.

Children are not allowed in the waiting area unattended. Our staff are not permitted to supervise children, so please ensure child care arrangements are in place to avoid your tests being rescheduled.

The day of the procedure

You will be shown to a cubicle and asked to undress and put on a gown; please bring a dressing gown if you have one. You may also be asked to remove jewellery, dentures, glasses, or other metal objects, which may show up on the X-rays.

The procedure

Your identification will be checked by a nurse and radiographer, a brief history will be taken; please tell the radiologist what medication, severe allergies, choking episodes or other medical conditions, such as thyroid disease and diabetes you may have.

Before the procedure, the interventional radiologist will explain the procedure and ask you to sign an electronic consent form.

Please feel free to ask any questions that you may have and, remember that even at this stage, you can decide against going ahead with the procedure if you so wish.

We will ask you to lie down on the x-ray table. The radiologist (x-ray doctor) will inject some contrast agent (dye) through the tube/line that is being assessed. The radiographer will take some x-ray images as the dye is being injected to check that it is in the correct position and that the dye is flowing freely.

You may be asked to roll into different positions so that the radiologist can ensure the tube is correctly positioned.

Your nurse, radiographer and radiologist will be with you the whole time during the procedure and will explain what is happening or what you need to do on the day. If you have any questions or concerns, it is OK to ask.

How long will this take? The procedure may take up to 30 minutes.

Is it uncomfortable? This procedure is not painful but, it can be uncomfortable and unpleasant.

After the procedure

The nurse will show you back through to the changing area where you will be able to get dressed again. You will then be able to leave the X-ray department.

Can I drive after my procedure?

We recommend that you do not drive for twenty-four hours and you ask a friend or relative to drive you home following your procedure.

How soon can I return to work?

We recommend you do not undertake strenuous activity and rest for the remainder of the day.

What do I do if I feel unwell after I have gone home?

If you feel unwell after your procedure, you should seek medical advice from your GP/hospital doctor or through the emergency department and inform them that you have had a procedure.

What happens after the line is inserted?

If the tubogram shows that the tube is where it should be and is working correctly then nothing further needs to be done.

If the line needs to be repositioned then an appointment will be made to do this for you.

Contacting the team

If you have any further questions about your procedure or an existing appointment, please contact the radiology nursing department (**Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm**) at **01279 82 2527 or 3405**

If you have any queries **outside of working hours (after 4pm and on weekends)**, you will be redirected to the main radiology reception.

Please note appointment booking cannot be made during this time.

Your feedback matters

If you would like to give feedback on your care, please contact our patient experience team at paht.pals@nhs.net or **01279 827211**.

Please contact the communications team at paht.communications@nhs.net if you would like this leaflet in another language or format.

