

Transrectal ultrasound scan

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about having a transrectal ultrasound scan.

Your appointment is at the Gastrointestinal (GI) Laboratory located in the GI/Lung Function Department at Cheltenham General Hospital. Please report to the receptionist at the Lung Function Department on arrival at the hospital.

What is a transrectal ultrasound scan?

This is a procedure to examine the rectum (back passage) and surrounding tissue using an ultrasound probe, a slim probe which is inserted into your rectum.

Why am I having this scan?

This scan is performed for different reasons which may include:

- Assessment of your rectum to help with diagnosis and planning treatment. You may also have been sent for other tests as part of the assessment package.
- Inspection of your rectum after treatment to check for any changes.

Before the scan

The physiologist will explain the procedure to you and answer any questions that you may have. When they are sure that you understand the procedure, you will be asked to sign a consent form.

Risks

There is little risk associated with having a transrectal ultrasound scan. You may feel some discomfort during the procedure or a sensation of wanting to open your bowels.

Enema

To help make the scan images clearer we require you to have an enema (small amount of fluid inserted into your back passage) before having the scan. The enema will clear the rectum of any faecal waste which may block the view of the back passage and surrounding tissue.

An enema pack may have been sent by post for you to perform at home.

If not, the enema will be given by the physiologist after you have signed the consent form. In which case:

- You will be asked to remove or lower some of your clothing then to lay on your left side on the examination couch. This is to allow the physiologist to give you the enema safely.
- Once the enema has been given a member of staff will show you to the toilet which is within our room. You will need to try and keep the enema in your rectum for at least 5 minutes. This is to allow enough time for the enema to work.
- After having your enema, you may be asked to wait in the department's waiting area until you see your consultant. There is an additional toilet located nearby.

During the scan

You will be asked to remove or lower some of your clothing, and lay on your left side on an examination couch.

The consultant will insert a clear plastic tube into your rectum. The plastic tube is attached to a light source and air bellows.

To allow the consultant to view the area to be examined, air will be inflated into your bowel before inserting the ultrasound probe. The air will disperse after the procedure and any discomfort will stop.

The ultrasound probe will be inserted through the clear plastic tube. You may feel a sensation of wanting to go to the toilet as a small balloon is slowly filled with water. This allows the probe to rotate and send ultrasound images to a monitor. A copy of these images will be kept in your hospital medical records.

After the scan

You will be discharged after the procedure and you will be able to carry on with your normal routine.

You will be fit to drive but if you are concerned, please arrange to be accompanied to the appointment or to use public transport.

Results

After the procedure the consultant may discuss your results with you and your partner or relative if you so wish, or will arrange a further appointment once all of the results are available.

Contact information

If you have any questions you would like to ask before your appointment, please contact the GI/Lung Function Department. We are not always able to answer the telephone during the day so please leave a message and we will contact you as soon as we can.

GI/Lung Function Department

Cheltenham General Hospital

Tel: 0300 422 2977

Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Further information

Gastroenterology

Website: www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/services-we-offer/gastroenterology/

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Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.

Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation.

*Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial.

Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>



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