

**Patient
Information**

Adults having a sialogram

Introduction

This leaflet will give you information about having a sialogram to examine and diagnose any problems with your salivary glands

Salivary glands

There are 3 major pairs of salivary glands which help to keep your mouth moist by draining saliva into your mouth through small tubes called ducts:

- Parotid glands are on the insides of your cheeks
- Submandibular glands are at the floor of your mouth
- Sublingual glands are under your tongue

Many different problems can interfere with the function of the salivary glands or block the ducts so they cannot drain the saliva. You may be referred for a sialogram if you are experiencing any problems with your glands.

What is a sialogram?

A sialogram is an X-ray of the salivary glands in your mouth. A contrast medium (dye) is used so that the ducts show up clearly on the X-ray images. The contrast medium is injected through a small tube which is inserted into the duct of the salivary gland.

You will be cared for by a radiologist, assisted by a radiographer or imaging assistant.

Risks

There are risks associated with X-rays and from the injection of contrast medium.

All X-ray procedures involve exposure to radiation in different amounts. During a sialogram you will be exposed to the same amount of radiation as you would receive from the atmosphere over a period of 6 to 12 months.

This examination has been deemed beneficial for you and that the benefit outweighs the associated risks of the radiation.

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Department

Radiology

Review due

February 2023

Patient Information

If you have any questions about the radiation risk please email ghn-tr.xray.appointments@nhs.net for further information.

The contrast medium can give you a metallic taste in your mouth, this will quickly wear off. Although rare, there is a risk of an allergic reaction.

Patients, who are or might be pregnant, must inform a member of staff before having the sialogram. This can be done by contacting the department when you receive your appointment (the contact number can be found on the letter) or on arrival at the department on the day of the appointment.

Am I required to make any special preparations?

No.

Can I bring a relative/friend?

Yes, but for reasons of safety, only in special circumstances will they be allowed to accompany you into the X-ray room. Children requiring an X-ray are allowed to be accompanied by an adult.

When you arrive

It is important to inform the radiologist if you are pregnant, or if there is a chance that you might be pregnant. You should also inform the radiologist or radiographer if you have diabetes, asthma or any allergies.

The radiographer will explain the procedure for your examination.

What will happen during the X-ray?

Before the examination you will be asked to rinse your mouth with lemon juice or a solution called Carbex® which has a bitter/sharp taste. This solution is used to open up the ducts to the salivary glands.

The radiographer will ask you to lie down on the X-ray couch. You will then be asked to open your mouth wide so that the doctor can insert a small tube into the duct.

Patient Information

The contrast will be injected through the tube and a number of X-rays will be taken. You may be given another drink of lemon juice or Carbex® to empty the gland and a further X-ray taken. There are no harmful effects if you swallow the contrast. The procedure will take about 15 minutes. You may drive and return home or to work immediately afterwards.

When will I get the results?

The images will be examined shortly after your visit and a report written and sent to your referring doctor.

Contact information

If you have a query about having the X-ray please ring the Imaging/Radiology Department on the number shown on your appointment letter.

Imaging Department

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

Tel: 0300 422 5691

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

We are pleased that we can offer state of the art technology for diagnosis. However, radiology equipment needs constant updating and there is a charitable fund for this. If you would like to make a donation, please send a cheque (made payable to GHNHSFT) to the address below.

Please send your donation to:

The Business Manager

Radiology Department

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

Great Western Road

Gloucester

GL1 3NN

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