

Having a bone densitometry scan

Introduction

This leaflet will give you information about having a bone densitometry scan, the risks involved and what you need to do to prepare for the scan.

What is a bone densitometry scan?

Osteoporosis is a condition where mineral is lost from the bones so they become more fragile. As a result they are more likely to break even after a simple fall. A bone densitometry scan is a test to measure the density of your bones. The technique is called dual energy X-ray absorption (DXA). You should not feel any pain or discomfort during the scan.

The scan will be carried out by a bone densitometrist.

Risks

A DXA scan uses a small amount of radiation, equivalent to that which we all receive from the atmosphere over a period of 2 to 3 days.

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

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

Preparations

Please arrive on time for your appointment. Where possible, wear clothes without any metal, this includes zips, belts, bras, clips or buttons. Please remove coins and keys from your pockets.

Can I bring a relative/friend?

Yes, but for reasons of safety, only in special circumstances, will they be permitted to accompany you into the scan room.

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Department

Radiology

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**Patient
Information**

When you arrive

It is important to let the department know if you are pregnant or if you think that you may be pregnant. Please hand in your completed questionnaire to the receptionist.

What happens during the scan?

You will be taken into the room where you will be asked to lie on a couch, fully clothed, for about 10 minutes while the machine takes images of your spine and hips.

How long will the scan take?

The process will take about 15 minutes.

When will you get the results?

The results will be sent to your referring doctor. This can take up to 3 weeks.

Any questions?

If you have any questions or any concerns about having the scan, please contact the Imaging Department on the number shown on your appointment letter. We are open Monday to Friday, 9:00am and 5:00pm.

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