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## INFORMATION- X-RAY



The leaflet tells you about having an X-ray. It explains what is involved and what the possible risks are. It is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor, but can act as a starting point for such discussions. If you have any questions about the procedure please ask the doctor who has referred you for the test or the department which is going to perform it.

### 1. What is an X-ray?

An X-ray is a picture of the internal structures of the body produced by exposure to a controlled source of X-rays and generally recorded on a sensitive photographic film.

Not all X-ray images will actually be recorded on film, but may be kept in digital form, and shown on a computer screen.

### 2. Are there any risks?

There are risks involved with X-rays, but a plain X-ray uses a small amount of radiation, equivalent to that which we all receive from the atmosphere over a period of two or three days.

Female patients who are, or might be pregnant, *must* inform the radiographer, who will cover the lower abdomen or pelvis with a lead apron, as the fetus is more sensitive to radiation. You should not worry about the radiation from the X-ray, as your doctor feels it is necessary to investigate a potential problem.

### 3. Are you required to make any special preparations?

No. However, please notify the radiology department if you have had a similar X-ray recently or if you are a woman who is or might be pregnant.

### 4. Can you bring a relative/friend?

Yes, but for reasons of safety, they may not be able to accompany you into the examination room, except in very special circumstances or in the case of young children.

### 5. When you arrive

You should go to the reception desk in the department, after which you will be shown where to wait until collected by a radiographer or other member of staff.

The procedure for your examination will be explained to you. If you have to undress for the

procedure, you will be shown to a private cubicle where you will be asked to put on the gown provided. You will be asked to place your clothes and personal items in a locker or a basket, which you will keep with you.

### 6. Who will you see?

You will be cared for by a radiographer and your film will be examined and reported on by the radiologist.

### 7. What happens during the X-ray?

You will be taken into the X-ray room where you will stand against a frame or part of the machine. Although the radiographer will go behind a screen, you will be seen and heard at all times.

You will be asked to stay still and sometimes to take a deep breath in and hold it for a few seconds.

### 8. Will it be uncomfortable?

No.

### 9. How long will it take?

The process to taking the film will last only a few seconds, but the radiographer may need to take further X-rays in different positions. This usually takes no more than 5–10 minutes, and unless you have had to wait, such as for emergency patients, your total time in the department should be about 20 minutes once it is your turn.

### 10. Are there any side-effects?

None at all.

### 11. When will you get the results?

The film will be examined after your visit and a written report on the findings sent to your referring doctor which is normally available same day.

### Finally

Some of your questions should have been answered by this leaflet, but remember that this is only a starting point for discussion about your treatment with the doctors looking after you. Make sure you are satisfied that you have received enough information about the procedure.