

What are the Risks Associated with a CT Scan?

CT scans are performed using x-rays. The dose of x-ray radiation needed for a CT scan is much more than for a single x-ray, but in many situations the benefit of a CT scan greatly outweighs the risk.

The contrast that is used contains iodine which some people are allergic to. There is also a risk that contrast can go into the surrounding tissue rather than the vein causing pain and swelling (extravasation). It is important to inform the Radiographer if you experience any pain as the contrast dye is injected and they will stop the scan if necessary.

How long with a CT Lumbar Spine Scan take?

Although CT scans can be quick, you should prepare to be in the CT department for 60 - 90 minutes. Occasionally other patients may need to be scanned urgently meaning that your appointment could be delayed.

Further Information

Please check your appointment letter to confirm if your CT scan is booked for Beaumont or St Joseph's Hospital Raheny.

Directions– Beaumont Hospital:

The CT Department is located on the Lower Ground Floor of Beaumont Hospital. Please check in at the Main X-ray Reception on arrival.

Directions– St Joseph's Hospital:

St. Joseph's Hospital is located on Springdale Road, Raheny, Dublin 5, approximately 12 km from the centre of Dublin. St. Joseph's is convenient to several bus routes and a short walk from Raheny DART Station. The 17, 29A, 31, 31A, 32, 32A, and 42A buses run from Eden Quay. The estimated bus time to Raheny Village is 20 minutes. Parking for patients and visitors is available on the St Joseph Hospital grounds. Cars are parked at owner's own risk.

If you have any questions, require further information, have specific requirements, please contact the CT Secretaries on: **01-8092786**.



CT Lumbar Spine Scan
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Beaumont Imaging & Interventional Directorate



BEAUMONT
HOSPITAL



RCSI HOSPITALS
OSPIDÉIL RCSI

PATIENT INFORMATION

LEAFLET:

CT LUMBAR SPINE SCAN

Important Note:

Please check your appointment letter as to whether your CT examination appointment is scheduled for Beaumont Hospital or St. Joseph's Hospital, Raheny.

Please contact **01-8092786** if you wish to re-schedule your appointment.

Introduction

A CT Lumbar Spine scan has been requested for you and this leaflet explains what the scan involves and what you need to do to prepare for your scan. Your CT scan will help make a diagnosis or monitor your treatment.

What is a CT Scan?

CT scans are performed using x-rays, which are a type of radiation. A CT (computerised tomography) scan is a specialised x-ray examination, which can produce cross-sectional, detailed images of any part of the head or body.

Will I receive much Radiation?

The amount of ionizing radiation you receive is relatively small and the risks are low. The radiation dose you receive from this scan is similar to that which you would receive naturally from your environment ranging from 6 months to 4 years, depending on your scan type. Your doctor will have weighed the benefit of improved diagnosis of your condition against the risk of the radiation exposure.

What happens during the CT Scan?

The CT Department adheres to the National Pregnancy Policy for this specific examination. This applies to patients of childbearing capacity, aged between 12-55 years old. Prior to your scan, you will be asked to complete a form with the Radiographer, to ensure there is no chance you are pregnant. Depending on the circumstances and if pregnancy cannot be ruled out, your examination may have to be rescheduled.

The scanner is a large, ring-shaped machine. You will be asked to lie on a table that can slide slowly in or out of the centre of the ring.

The Radiographer will position the table so that your lumbar spine is in the centre of the scanner. The x-ray unit inside the ring will rotate around you as the table moves. You are not enclosed in a tunnel and the scan itself is a very quick procedure. It is important to remain very still during the examination.

The Radiographer will operate the scanner from a control room behind a thick lead glass window. He or she will be able to see, hear and speak to you during the procedure.

You will not have any radiation in your body after the scan.

What Preparation is Required for a CT Lumbar Spine Scan?

You do not need to fast for a CT Lumbar Spine scan. Take all medications as normal. Many CT examinations involve you having a “contrast medium” injected into a vein to increase the quality of information obtained from the scan. The injection may cause a warm feeling passing around the body or a metallic taste in the mouth.

Any metal objects such as jewellery will need to be removed from the part of the body being scanned.

It is important to tell your doctor and / or contact the CT department on 01-8092786 PRIOR to your CT scan appointment if you:

- Had a previous allergic reaction to x-ray contrast
- Have any allergies
- Have asthma
- Are diabetic and taking metformin (glucophage; janumet)
- Have reduced renal function
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding

How do I receive the results of my scan?

The results of your CT scan will not be available immediately. The results will be sent to the Doctor who referred you for the CT scan.