Preparation for your CT Colonography Examination

Patient Information

Radiology Department
Preparation for your CT Colonography Appointment

There are 2 parts to this information leaflet.

**Part 1** tells you about Gastrografin, the special liquid that you need to take before your examination.

**Part 2** tells you how to take it and the special diet instructions you need to follow.

Please read both sections of the leaflet completely and follow the instructions in order to prepare your large bowel for the test. If you do not follow these special instructions fully, we may not be able to perform the test.

**PART 1 - Gastrografin**

**What is Gastrografin and why do I need to take it?**

Your Doctor has arranged for you to have a CT Colonography examination, which is a CT scan of the large bowel.

In order to see the inside of your bowel clearly we ask you to drink a special liquid called Gastrografin. It makes the CT pictures of your bowel clearer. Gastrografin is a contrast medium (a dye) which contains iodine.

Please contact the CT scan department if you are allergic to iodine or have difficulty swallowing liquids.

**Does Gastrografin have any side effects?**

All drugs may have some side effects. Most people who receive Gastrografin experience few side effects. **Gastrografin does have some laxative effects and it may cause diarrhoea so it is advisable to stay close to a toilet.** It is important to take note of any new symptoms you experience after starting the preparation. If you are concerned please telephone the number on your appointment letter to speak to a member of the CT Team.

In some cases Gastrografin can also cause nausea and vomiting, skin rashes and very rarely anaphylactic/allergic reaction. If you are concerned that you may be experiencing an allergic reaction please contact your GP or A&E Department for advice.
Can I take any other medications along with Gastrografin?
If you are taking iron tablets stop taking them 7 days before your scan.

If you are taking Interleukin-2, or have done so within the last several weeks, then please telephone the Radiology Department and let us know the last date you took this medicine.

If you are taking beta-blockers, any hypersensitivity or allergic type reaction can be aggravated. If you are concerned you may be experiencing any allergic reactions please contact your GP or A&E Department for advice.

Unless taking any of the medication mentioned above, you should continue to take your regular medicines as prescribed by your Doctor unless you are told otherwise.

Is there any situation when I should not take Gastrografin?
If you are hypersensitive or allergic to iodine-containing contrast media (“x-ray dye”) or have Hyperthyroidism (over active thyroid), then you should not take Gastrografin. Please contact the CT Scan Department for further instructions or advice.

If you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant, please contact the CT Scan Department on the telephone number on your appointment letter.

If you are having tests or taking thyrotrophic radioisotopes for thyroid disorders, Gastrografin may make any tests or treatment less effective for up to several weeks. Always tell your Doctor that you have had Gastrografin recently.

Caution
Keep all tablets and medicines out of reach of children. Never give any medicine prescribed for you to anyone else.
PART 2 – Taking Gastrografin and Dietary Instructions

What you have to eat before the test will improve the performance of the bowel preparation and the diagnostic accuracy of the procedure.

Do not start to take this medication until you receive your CT colonography appointment.

Two days before the CT Colonography appointment:

You can eat low fibre foods including the following:

- Milk (2 cups a day), plain yoghurt, cheese, butter, margarine
- White fish, chicken: boiled/steamed/grilled
- Eggs, Tofu
- White Pasta, white rice
- White bread, white pitta, white flour chapattis
- Potatoes with no skin e.g. mashed, boiled, chipped
- Smooth soups (no solid bits e.g. sieved chicken noodles, tomato), Bovril, Oxo
- Clear jelly, boiled sweets, ice cream, chocolate, (no fruit or nut pieces)
- Salt, pepper, sugar, sweeteners and honey

Have plenty to drink during the day including tea, coffee, squash, fizzy drinks, water clear fruit juices (e.g. apple, grape, cranberry)

Do not eat high fibre foods such as:

- Red meats, pink fish (e.g. salmon)
- Fruit, vegetables, salad, mushrooms, sweetcorn
- Cereals, nuts, seeds, pips, bran, beans, lentils
- Brown bread, brown or wild rice, brown pasta, pickles, chutney

Suggested meals could include for example:

**Breakfast:**
- White bread-toast with butter and honey
- Boiled or poached egg

**Lunch:**
- Grilled fish or chicken with white rice and boiled potatoes (no skin)
- Scrambled eggs on white toast
- Vanilla ice cream
After lunch do not eat any more solid food until after your scan. You can still have smooth soups, jelly, ice cream, custard, complan drinks, Bovril, Oxo and water, clear juices, fizzy drinks, coffee and tea.

At 7:00pm drink half of the bottle of Gastrografin (50mls) – you can mix it with an equal amount of water and some cordial.

The day before the CT Colonography appointment:

Do not eat any solid food. You can still have smooth soups, jelly, ice cream, custard, complan drinks, Bovril, Oxo and water, clear juices, fizzy drinks, coffee and tea.

Drink as much tea or water as you like but drink at least ¼ of a pint (150mls) of fluid every hour on the hour during the daytime.

At 7:00pm drink the remaining half of the bottle of Gastrografin (50mls) – you can mix it with an equal amount of water and some cordial.

On the day of the CT Colonography appointment:

Do not eat any solid food. You may drink water or clear sugary drinks.

You will be in the Radiology Department for approximately one to one and a half hours.

As part of the procedure it may be necessary to give you an injection into a vein in your arm.

Please refer to the information leaflet “Having a CT Colonography” for further details about the procedure itself.

After the procedure

You will need to wait in the Department for approximately 20 minutes after your examination.

You can return to your normal eating and drinking pattern. We recommend that you drink plenty of fluids for the following 2-3 days.

Although the carbon dioxide used to inflate your bowel is absorbed quite quickly following the procedure some minor abdominal discomfort may remain for 1-2 hours. Returning to your normal diet and moving around will help to ease any remaining discomfort.

However please seek urgent medical advice (your GP or Accident and Emergency out of hours) if you experience any of the following symptoms over the next 4 days:
1. Severe abdominal pain
2. Increasingly painful abdominal discomfort
3. Sweating and nausea

You may have been given an injection (Buscopan) used to relax the muscles in the bowel wall during your examination. Blurring of your vision can be a side effect of this injection although, this side effect is short lived, usually 30 minutes. If you do experience blurring please make sure your vision has returned to normal before driving.

Very rarely some people can develop blurred vision within 48 hours of this test as this injection may aggravate an underlying condition called glaucoma; if so you are advised to seek medical help.

How to contact us?

If you have any questions, concerns or you need any further information, please contact the CT Scan Department on **01942 822368**.

CT Scan Department
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan
WN1 2NN
Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
Wigan Lane
Wigan WN1 2NN

In addition to the Patient Relations/PALS Service, you can contact HELPline on 01942 822111.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille and other languages upon request.
For more information call 01942 773106.