

Having a parotid sialogram

Information for patients



What is a sialogram?

A sialogram is an x-ray of the salivary ducts and glands. The salivary glands are located on each side of the face. They release saliva into the mouth.

You will firstly have x-rays taken of your jaw area. A thin plastic tube is inserted into the small hole through which the saliva enters the mouth from the salivary gland. This is found on the inside of your cheek. When the tube is in place a small amount of contrast (x-ray dye) is inserted into the gland whilst x-rays are taken. Once the gland has been examined you will be asked to rinse your mouth with a lemon flavoured liquid and a final x-ray is taken. The examination is not normally painful although you might experience slight discomfort.

Who performs the test?

The test is performed by a team of healthcare professionals which may include a radiographer, an advanced radiographer practitioner / specialist radiographer, an assistant and a radiologist.

How do I prepare for the test?

You do not need to prepare in advance for this test. You may continue to eat and drink as normal. Do not stop taking vital medicines (for example, heart drugs, steroids, diuretics / water tablets).

What should I bring with me?

Please do not bring large sums of money or items of value

with you. It is helpful if you remove necklaces and earrings before attending. Unfortunately we are unable to provide any childcare so please make alternative arrangements if necessary.

How long will I be in the department?

You may be in the department for up to one hour. Although we strive to keep to your appointment time, occasionally there may be a delay due to emergency patients.

Are there any side-effects?

Radiation

This procedure involves x-rays. Female patients who are, or might be pregnant **must** inform a member of staff in advance.

The amount of radiation used is more than an ordinary x-ray of the chest or body and is equal to the natural radiation we receive from the atmosphere over a period of approximately two years. The risk from this radiation dose is very low.

Allergic reaction

Some patients may be allergic to the x-ray dye or medicines we give you. This is very rare. If you have any allergies please tell the member of staff who is performing your examination, at the start of the examination.

Do you ever fail to complete the examination?

This is a safe examination that is usually successful. If, for any reason, we are unable to perform the examination we will inform your doctor who will discuss the alternatives with you.

Despite these small risks your doctor believes it is beneficial for you to have this examination. Do bear in mind that there are greater risks from missing a serious disorder by not having the examination.

How will I feel following the test?

You should not experience any adverse effects. On occasion there may be some minor pain or swelling for the following 24 hours. Some patients find they have an improvement of their symptoms following the procedure. You can continue to eat and drink as normal.

How will I get my results?

At the end of the test the radiologist will discuss the results with you. The results will be sent to your GP (if they referred you for the test. If so you must make an appointment to see them). If you have been referred by a hospital consultant / specialist then you will be sent an appointment to attend the relevant clinic or contacted by letter with results.



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