

# Having a colonic transit study

Information for patients



## **What is a colonic transit study?**

A colonic transit study is a simple x-ray examination that determines how long it takes for food to travel through the digestive system.

## **Who performs the test?**

The test is performed by a radiographer.

## **How do I prepare for the test?**

At the date and time handwritten on your appointment letter you need to swallow the capsule provided with some water. You will then attend for your x-ray four days later at the date and time printed on your appointment letter.

You can continue to eat and drink as normal. Please continue to take all of your usual medications, including any laxatives that you have been prescribed.

The capsule you swallow does not interact with the body so you will not feel any different after you have taken it.

## **What should I bring with me?**

You will be required to change into a gown for this examination. The department will supply you with a gown but you may wish to bring your own dressing gown. Please do not bring large sums of money or items of value with you. Unfortunately we are unable to provide any childcare so please make alternative arrangements if necessary.

## How long will I be in the department?

The examination takes about five minutes but we suggest you allow 30 minutes for your examination. Although we try to keep to your appointment time, occasionally there may be a delay due to emergency patients.

## Are there any side effects or risks?

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 the same as an ordinary x-ray of the chest or body and is less than the natural radiation we receive from the atmosphere over a period of approximately one year. The risk from this radiation dose is very low.

## 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 will not feel any different to normal. There are no side effects or after effects of the capsule or the x-ray. You will be able to continue to eat and drink and resume normal activities immediately.

## How will I get my results?

You will not be given your results on the day. 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 the results.



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