



**The Leeds  
Teaching Hospitals**  
NHS Trust

# Having a small bowel meal

Information for patients



**Leeds**  
Radiology

## What is a small bowel meal?

This is an examination of the small bowel to see if x-ray dye passes from your small bowel into your liver. This can sometimes happen after you have had a liver transplant or other liver operations where the bile ducts from the liver are joined to the small bowel (often called a Roux loop).

## What does it involve?

You will be given x-ray dye to drink that needs to pass through your small bowel. We cannot predict how long this will take and you will have x-rays taken of your abdomen at different times to assess this.

## Who performs the examination?

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

## How do I prepare for the examination?

### On the day of the examination

**HAVE NOTHING TO EAT OR DRINK** for **SIX HOURS** before the examination. You may have **CLEAR FLUIDS ONLY** until **ONE HOUR** before your appointment.

Do not stop taking vital medication.

### Important note for patients with diabetes:

If you have an early morning appointment bring your morning medication and a snack with you.

If you have an afternoon appointment eat breakfast and take your morning medication at least six hours before your appointment. Bring a snack and any afternoon medications with you.

Please telephone the department if you have any questions.

## In the Radiology Department

You will be given a gown to change into. Please do not bring large sums of money or items of value with you.

### How long will I be in the department?

Allow 90 minutes for your examination. Although we try to keep to your appointment time, there may be a delay due to emergency patients.

We are unable to provide any childcare so please make alternative arrangements.

### Are there any risks?

#### Radiation

This examination involves x-rays. Patients who are, or might be pregnant **must** inform a member of staff.

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. This is very rare. If you have any allergies, please tell a member of staff.

Despite these small risks your doctor believes it is beneficial for you to have this examination.

## Do you ever fail to complete the examination?

This examination 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

## Following the examination

You will be able to eat, drink and continue normal activities.

## Are there any side effects?

The x-ray dye can have a constipating effect so drink plenty of fluids over the following few days to keep hydrated.

How do I get my results?

You will not be given your results on the day. They will be sent to your hospital consultant and they will contact you.



## What did you think of your care?

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