

## Questions

Sometimes you or your family members may have questions for your medical team. These questions often occur to you at a time when your consultant is not available. This section is for you to use to list your questions in preparation for your next visit/appointment.

Ask your doctor:

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If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact [patient.information@christie.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@christie.nhs.uk)

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for urgent support and specialist advice  
**The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658**  
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Christie at Salford

## Information about your radiotherapy planning CT scan

### What is a planning scan?

A radiotherapy planning scan uses a CT scanner to produce cross-sectional images or 'slices' through the body using X-rays linked to a computer. The scans which are undertaken to plan your radiotherapy are solely aimed to give enough information to plan the radiotherapy accurately. These scans are not diagnostic and therefore do not give sufficient information to assess the status of your cancer or any other abnormalities.

Our priority is to ensure that these X-rays benefit you and assist the consultant when planning your treatment. Please ask if you have any concerns.

You will be able to drive yourself home following your scan.

It is important to let the radiographers know if there is any possibility that you may be pregnant.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the radiographer when you arrive or during your appointment.



## Before your scan

- Please eat and drink normally. If you have to modify your meals, we will tell you beforehand. Although we would advise you to make sure that you are well hydrated before and after your scan.
- It is **sometimes** necessary to give you a special drink of contrast which outlines the areas of interest. The drink is given on arrival after completing a health questionnaire and will usually take **1 hour** to drink.
- It **may** also be necessary to see your organs and vessels more clearly. To do this we **may** have to give you an injection of **contrast agent**. The radiographer will do this via a cannula in the back of the hand or the arm.
- When you arrive a radiographer will take you into the scan room and explain all about the procedure.
- You will not need to fully undress for the procedure. We will simply separate your clothes over the area we are scanning, or give you a gown to maintain your modesty.
- You can usually go to the toilet as normal. However, sometimes we ask you not to empty your bladder whilst in the department. If this is the case we will tell you when you arrive.
- If you take regular pain relief, please bring this medication with you in case there are delays in the department.
- **Please let the radiographer know if there is any possibility that you may be pregnant.**

## About X-rays and radiation

- Everyone receives some ionising radiation every day from background radiation. This comes from our environment.
- Your age and size will influence the amount of radiation used.
- We ensure that we keep the amount of radiation used as low as possible.
- Our scanning equipment is regularly maintained and is subject to checks by both the radiographers and medical physics teams.

## During your scan

- The scanner is a large ring with a large hole in the middle. The table moves through this hole. **The scanner is not a tunnel.**
- The radiographers will guide you into the treatment position and draw some marks on your skin using a marker pen. An appropriate position will be determined at the scan, normally on your back. Please let us know during your appointment if you are struggling with this position.
- The table is motorised and it moves slowly up and down through the scanner. These movements are fully controlled by the radiographers.
- During your scan you will not feel or see anything, however, the machine makes loud noises similar to a washing machine.
- The best thing you can do throughout your scan is to relax and breathe normally, unless specifically requested otherwise.
- During your scan you are watched the whole time by the scanning radiographers to ensure that you are okay.
- Your scanning session will usually last between 15 - 30 minutes, however the radiographer will let you know if it will take any longer.

## After your scan

- With your permission, we will replace the pen marks with small permanent tattoos which will allow you to bathe and shower as normal. The permanent marks are the size of a small freckle. These marks will be used to set you up for your treatment.
  - You will receive treatment appointments after your scan.
- It is important that you tell staff if you are going to need hospital transport to get to your future appointments.**
- It may be necessary for some patients to see the doctor for consent purposes.
  - If you have been given a contrast injection we will ask you to remain in the department for 15 - 30 minutes following the scan to ensure that you are feeling okay.
  - Please be aware, you could be in the hospital for up to 2 hours depending on your scan requirements and if you require consent.

If you have any questions, please contact us on **0161 918 7800** or **0161 918 7787**.