

Radiology department

# Information about your skeletal survey (skeletal X-ray examination)

## What is a skeletal survey examination?

A skeletal survey examination involves taking pictures of different parts of your body using X-rays. The whole examination takes about 45 minutes.

## Is any preparation required for my skeletal survey examination?

There is no specific preparation for this examination.

There is a cubicle where you can undress and be given a gown to wear. (If you wish you can bring your own dressing gown to wear over the cotton gown). You can leave your clothes in the cubicle, but take any valuables with you. The radiographer will escort you into the X-ray room.

## What happens during the skeletal survey examination?

The examination involves taking X-rays of your head, chest, shoulders, pelvis, upper and lower spine.

X-rays of the head, chest and shoulders are usually done standing, if possible, or sitting down.

We will ask you to lie on the X-ray table whilst X-rays of the pelvis and spine are taken. Some will be done while you are lying flat and some while you are lying on your side, if possible.

## What happens after my skeletal survey examination?

The radiographer will check that your X-rays are technically correct and assist you off the bed and you are free to leave. The radiologist, a doctor who specialises in X-rays, will send a report to the doctor who referred you.

## How safe is the examination?

There are small risks associated with the radiation that is used to produce the X-ray images. However, these images give the doctors information that helps in your treatment. We think that the benefits of these X-rays outweigh the risks of exposure to radiation. If you have any concerns please talk to the radiographer when you arrive.

## What are the benefits of your skeletal X-ray?

X-rays are very good for seeing detail in bones and for looking at the chest. It is also a quick test to perform.



## Are there any alternatives to a skeletal X-ray?

There are other tests, such as bone scans that can sometimes be used.

## What happens if I decide not to have a skeletal X-ray?

If you decide not to have a skeletal X-ray, please discuss this with your doctor or nurse.

## What happens if I cannot keep my appointment?

If you cannot keep your appointment, contact the radiology department straight away.

If you have questions about this appointment or any queries about the examination, please phone:

**0161 446 3320**

Please attend promptly at the time shown on the attached appointment letter. This helps to avoid delays which can happen when several X-rays have to be taken for an examination.

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.

We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. 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

