

Radiology department

# Cystogram

## Introduction

This leaflet tells you about the procedure known as a cystogram. It explains what is involved and what the benefits and risks are. It may make you think of things you would like to discuss with your doctor.

## What is a cystogram?

A cystogram is a study of the lower urinary tract, or, more specifically, the bladder. The examination shows the appearance of the bladder and how it fills. It is a short procedure that will be carried out in the radiology department by a radiologist.

## Why do I need a cystogram?

This examination will help your doctor to make a correct diagnosis or decision about your treatment. You may be having a cystogram to check for any problems, such as repeated urinary tract infections or urinary incontinence, or it may be a follow-up examination after an operation.

The examination can also look for structural problems of the bladder or if there has been injury to the bladder. If you have any questions about the exam, please contact your referring doctor.

## Who has made the decision?

Your doctors and the radiologist doing the cystogram will have discussed your situation and feel this is the best treatment option.

## What to tell the doctor

- If you have any allergies
- If you have had a previous reaction to intravenous contrast medium (the dye used for some X-rays and CT scanning).

**If you have had a previous reaction to intravenous contrast medium (the dye used for some X-rays and CT scanning), please inform the Radiology department before your appointment.**

## Agreeing to treatment

We will ask you to sign a consent form agreeing to accept the treatment that you are being offered. The basis of the agreement is that you have had The Christie's written description of the proposed treatment and that you have been given an opportunity to discuss any concerns. You are entitled to request a second opinion from another doctor who specialises in treating this cancer. You can ask your own consultant or your GP to refer you. Your consent may be withdrawn at any time before or during this treatment. Should you decide to withdraw your consent then a member of your treating team will discuss the possible consequences with you.



## Who will be doing the cystogram?

A specially trained doctor called a radiologist will carry out the procedure. Radiologists have special expertise in using X-ray and scanning equipment, and also in interpreting the images produced. They need to look at these images while carrying out the procedure.

## Where will the procedure take place?

In the Integrated Procedure Unit (IPU) in the special X-Ray procedure room.

## How do I prepare for a cystogram?

There is no preparation required for this procedure

## What happens during the procedure?

**Patients who do not have a catheter** - You will be asked to empty your bladder prior to the examination. You will then be brought into the fluoroscopy room and asked to lie on the X-ray table. Your genital area will be cleaned and draped with sterile towels. Some local anaesthetic jelly will be used to make the examination more comfortable. Then a thin hollow tube called a catheter will be inserted into your urethra (the opening through which you urinate). This might be a little uncomfortable, but should not be painful. The catheter will gently be advanced into your bladder.

**Patients who have a catheter** - If you are having a cystogram after an operation, you may already have a catheter in place. If this is the case, we will use this catheter for the examination. The catheter will not be removed unless your doctor has specifically asked us to. If you have any questions about this, please ask your doctor or the radiologist on the day.

A small amount of the contrast dye will then be put into your bladder via the catheter. As the contrast dye flows into your bladder, X-ray images will be taken. You may be repositioned so that we can see the area from several angles. The X-ray equipment may also move around you in order to gain the best possible images. The radiologist and radiographer will be with you at all times to assist you.

Once all the X-ray images have been taken, the catheter will be removed, and you will be able to use the toilet. You may be asked to return to the fluoroscopy room so that an additional X-ray image can be taken of your bladder. You may be given an injection of antibiotics to reduce the risk of any infection.

The examination lasts approximately 20 minutes but may take longer. Please understand that you may have to wait a few minutes during your examination whilst the images are being checked. It is important that the images contain all the necessary information.

## Will it hurt?

There may be some discomfort when the catheter is inserted but this should not be painful. Some people experience discomfort during urination immediately after the procedure. This discomfort usually resolves in less than 12 hours. If you are concerned, please tell the radiologist or radiographer.

## What will happen after the procedure?

If you have come for this procedure as an outpatient you will be able to go home straight away. If you are an inpatient you will be sent back to the ward, no special after care will be required.

## What are the risks and complications of the procedure?

Rarely patients have an allergic reaction to the contrast dye used in the procedure. Medications are available in the department if this does happen to occur.

## Further information

This is available from the radiology department on the phone numbers below or from the following websites:

Macmillan Cancer Support: [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

British Society of Interventional Radiology: [www.bsir.org](http://www.bsir.org)

## If you have any problems or worries please contact:

From 9am to 5pm:

Radiology department on **0161 918 2346**

Out of hours and weekends (for emergencies):

Ring The Christie on **0161 446 3000** and ask for the on-call radiologist.

The Christie Hotline: **0161 446 3658** (24 hours)

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 **[the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net)**

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