

CT Chest

A chest CT scan includes images of the lungs, the heart, bones of the thorax and the blood vessels. These scans are used to:

- examine abnormalities found on conventional chest x-rays,
- help diagnose the causes of clinical signs or symptoms of disease of the chest, such as cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, or fever,
- detect and evaluate the extent of tumors that arise in the chest, or tumors that have spread there from other parts of the body,
- assess whether tumors are responding to treatment,
- help plan radiation therapy,
- evaluate injury to the chest, including the heart, blood vessels, lungs, ribs and spine.

A chest CT can demonstrate various lung disorders, such as:

- benign and malignant tumors,
- pneumonia,
- tuberculosis,
- bronchiectasis,
- cystic fibrosis,
- inflammation or other diseases of the pleura (the covering of the lungs),
- interstitial and chronic lung disease,
- congenital abnormalities.

BEFORE THE SCAN:

When you arrive for your CT scan, you may be asked to undress from the waist up and wear a gown. Metal objects, including jewellery and piercings, may affect the CT images and should be removed prior to the scan. Women will be asked to remove bras containing metal underwire or clips.

In some CT scans of the chest, contrast (x-ray dye) will be used to make certain structures more visible on the images. If contrast is being used, you will be asked not to eat or drink anything for four hours before your scan.

The scan itself should only take a few minutes, but please allow yourself up to half an hour for the appointment.

DURING THE SCAN:

You will be positioned on the CT scanning table, usually lying flat on your back with your arms resting above your head. You will be asked to hold your breath at times during the scan.

If you require contrast, a small needle (similar to a blood test) is placed in a vein in your arm before the scan. When the contrast is injected during the scan, you may experience a feeling of warmth or a metallic taste in your mouth. **Please note that at this time, contrast studies are performed at our Ascot Hospital location, near the Eilerslie Racecourse.**