

CT Soft Tissue Neck (with contrast)

This is a study of the neck region from the skull base (bottom of the head) to the lung apices (top of the chest). The spine, airway, vessels of the neck, as well as salivary and thyroid glands, are included. The mandible (jaw bone), oral cavity (mouth and tongue), pharynx and larynx (including the vocal cords) are also included.

There are a variety of reasons for this scan including:

- Parotid or submandibular gland lesion or infection,
- Head and neck cancers,
- Neck mass or abscess,
- Tongue mass or lesion,
- Foreign body in the neck or upper airway,
- Tumours or infections involving the vocal cords.

BEFORE THE SCAN:

Metal objects, including earrings & other facial piercings, glasses, dentures, hearing aids, necklaces and hairpins, may affect the CT images and are removed (if possible) prior to the scan.

During the scan, CT contrast (x-ray dye) will be used to highlight certain structures on the images and 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:

For a CT scan of the soft tissues of the neck, you will be asked to lie flat on your back with your head in a head rest. It is important that you do not move during the scan. You will be asked not to swallow during the scan to prevent the images being blurred.

Before the scan starts, a small needle (similar to a blood test) is placed in a vein in your arm, and the contrast will be injected during the scan. You may experience a feeling of warmth during the injection or a metallic taste in your mouth. **Please note that at this time, contrast studies are performed at our Ascot Hospital location, near the Ellerslie Racecourse.**