

Welcome to the X-ray and Ultrasound Department at Tiverton and District Hospital

(Eastern services)

Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

This leaflet provides important information when attending your appointment at the X-ray and Ultrasound Department at Tiverton and District Hospital.

Please ensure you follow the instructions on your letter which will take you to the correct area for your appointment.

What is an X-ray?

An X-ray is a quick procedure commonly used to produce images of the inside of the body. X-rays are mainly used to look at the bones and joints, although they're sometimes used to detect problems affecting soft tissue, such as internal organs. X-rays can be used to help detect a range of conditions.

Why do I need this examination?

It has been identified that you have some symptoms that require you to have an X-ray examination, or you may be for a follow-up examination to monitor your medical condition.

Radiation information

How X-rays work

X-rays are a form of radiation that can move through the body without being seen or felt. As X-rays pass through you, they are absorbed at different rates by different parts of the body. A detector located on the opposite side of you captures these X-rays after they have passed through you and transforms them into an image.

In a hospital, there are many types of medical imaging procedures each with different technologies. Radiography, fluoroscopy, and computed tomography (CT) all work on the same principle, using penetrating X-rays to form an image of internal structures in the body.

Risks

X-rays offer valuable benefits in healthcare by providing a quick and non-invasive way to see inside the body, however, as with many aspects of medicine, there are risks associated with their use. X-rays are a form of ionising radiation, meaning they have enough energy to potentially cause damage to DNA, increasing the risk of cancer later in life. However, these risks are low.

In the UK, on average each of us is exposed to a level of background radiation mainly originating from naturally occurring minerals in the Earth but also other sources like food, and cosmic rays from space. For example, having a typical X-ray of your chest, limbs or teeth is equivalent to the same levels of radiation as you would naturally receive in three days of regular life. This would result in less than a one in a million chance of additional risk of fatal cancer in your lifetime [1].

While the benefits of clinical diagnosis using X-rays generally far outweigh the risks, efforts should be made to minimise unnecessary exposures. Within the hospital, specialised staff, including radiographers, physicists and engineers monitor the use of X-rays and ensure equipment is safe.

Pregnancy

It is also important to understand the effect of radiation on pregnancy. Due to possible effects of radiation exposure on the developing foetus, when having an X-ray, you should inform a member of staff if you think you might be pregnant.

If you have any concerns about undergoing an X-ray, feel free to discuss them with your healthcare provider.

All patients aged between 12 to 55 years of age (regardless of gender) will be asked to complete a pregnancy status consent form.

How long will it take?

The examination usually takes around five - 20 minutes to complete. This depends upon the type and number of X-rays needed.

During the X-ray

Some clothing, particularly anything containing metal, or with buttons, zips or embroidery, can show up on an X-ray, so you may be asked to change into a gown and/or remove jewellery by a member of staff. Depending upon the area of the body to be examined you may also be asked to remove any dentures, hearing aids, glasses or hair clips.

¹ 'Patient dose information: guidance', GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/medical-radiation-patient-doses/patient-dose-information-guidance>

During the X-ray the Radiographer will firstly confirm your identity and the area to be examined. You'll then usually be asked to lie on a table, stand against a flat surface or sit on a chair next to the X-ray table so that the part of your body being examined can be positioned in the right place.

This may occasionally be uncomfortable but should not be painful.

The X-ray machine will be carefully positioned at the part of the body being examined by the Radiographer. The Radiographer will complete the exposure (X-ray picture) from behind a clear screen.

What is an Ultrasound scan?

This is a simple examination, which uses sound waves to build up a picture of your body on a television screen. Ultrasound examinations are carried out by Sonographers.

Why do I need this examination?

It has been identified you have some symptoms that require you to have an ultrasound examination, or it maybe you need a follow-up examination to monitor your medical condition.

Are there any risks?

Ultrasound has been in regular use for many years and is considered safe. However, it will only be performed with good medical reason and by staff with the appropriate qualifications and experience.

What do I need to do?

You need to read the accompanying letter carefully. It may contain specific instructions that need to be followed in order to give a successful result.

How long will it take?

The examination usually takes between 15 - 30 minutes to complete. This depends upon the type of scan needed.

During the scan

You may be asked to change into a gown by a member of staff. This will depend upon the area of the body to be examined.

On entering the ultrasound room, the sonographer performing the scan will introduce themselves, and ask you to lie on a couch, or sit on a chair.

A special gel will be placed on the part of your body that is to be examined. A small transducer (ultrasound "camera") is then moved over the skin to obtain a picture. The examination is usually painless; however, you may feel some pressure as the transducer is applied to get a better view.

Can I still take my regular medication?

You can still take any regular medication, unless you have been asked not to eat and the medicine requires you to take it with food.

If you are diabetic and have been asked not to eat, please contact us on the telephone number listed on the top of your appointment letter. We may need to make special arrangements for you.

Children

We ask you not to bring children if at all possible as they will not be permitted into the X-ray room with you whilst you are having your procedure. We appreciate that at times this may be difficult. Therefore, you may wish to bring another adult with you to supervise them in the waiting area whilst your examination is performed.

Can I bring a friend/relative?

Yes, however they will not normally be able to accompany you into the examination room and we would ask that you limit the number of people you bring with you due to limited waiting area space.

Chaperones: where examinations of an intimate nature are carried out you may choose to have a chaperone. Please speak with the radiographer / sonographer who will arrange one for you.

What will happen to the results?

We aim to report examinations as soon as possible. The results will be sent to your referring clinician.

You will not be told the results of your examination at the time of your appointment.

Personal choices

As a teaching hospital, we often have radiographers and medical staff undergoing training. If a student is to be present or perform your examination we will ask your permission. You have the right to refuse. This will not affect your care in any way.

Valuables

Patients are encouraged to leave their valuables at home. It is the patient's responsibility to ensure all valuables are on their person before leaving the X-ray and Ultrasound Department.

Hoists and slings

If you require a hoist please inform the department prior to your appointment on the contact numbers listed in your appointment letter to ensure availability of equipment and suitably trained staff. We may be able to support the use of your own sling, but evidence of its six-monthly safety (LOLER) examination is required and it will need to pass a visual inspection first. We can provide approved single-use slings that are readily available in the department.”

Cancelling your appointment

If you are unable to attend your appointment, we would be grateful if you could contact us on the number listed on the top of your appointment letter as soon as possible. We can then offer your original appointment to another patient. A further date and time will then be arranged for you. Please be advised that if you fail to attend your appointment, it may be necessary to remove you from the X-ray or Ultrasound waiting list.

Please note: if you have had D&V (diarrhoea and vomiting) you will need to contact us to rebook your appointment unless you have been clear of symptoms for the past 48 hours.

Contact us

If you found reading your leaflet difficult, you do not understand what it means for you if you have any queries or concerns you can contact us on the number listed on the top of your appointment letter and we can talk it through with you or alternatively you can email us rduh.radiologyappointments@nhs.net

How to get to Tiverton and District Hospital

Tiverton and District Hospital is located at Kennedy Way in Tiverton, EX16 6NT.

If possible, we encourage people to use public transport and other sustainable means of travel.

- We are easily accessible by local bus routes.
- Tiverton Parkway Train Station is seven miles away.
- Bike racks are available.

For help planning your journey please see the following websites:

- www.stagecoachbus.com
- www.travelinesw.com
- www.traveldevon.info

Limited chargeable car parking is available.

Further information

For more information on Medical Imaging, please visit our website:

[NHS Royal Devon | Medical Imaging - Eastern services](#)

Your notes

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
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Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

You can also share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at www.careopinion.org.uk or freephone 0800 122 3135.



Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

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www.royaldevon.nhs.uk

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