

## Having a Fibroscan

### What is a Fibroscan?

A Fibroscan is a type of ultrasound that can measure the degree of scarring within your liver. It is a simple, painless test that uses high frequency sound waves. Your doctor recommended that you have this test to help us understand the condition of your liver. It is carried out by a trained operator (nurse or technician).

### What are the benefits of this scan?

Having a Fibroscan helps to establish how much damage or scarring may be present in the liver and helps your doctor to plan treatment and follow-up.

### Are there any risks in having a Fibroscan?

It does not have any potential complications or risks. It is non-invasive, which means that it does not break the skin or enter your body. It can be used safely in most people, including pregnant women and people with implantable devices such as a pacemaker or an internal defibrillator.

### Who is eligible to use the service?

People who are referred to our liver service through their GP or are already under the hepatology service requiring regular follow up.

### Are there any alternatives?

Your doctor or nurse will explain any alternatives available to you in detail. One option is to have a liver biopsy. This is where a small sample of liver tissue is removed with a needle. A liver biopsy has several disadvantages: for example, you need to stay in hospital for several hours after the

procedure. It also carries risks, such as internal bleeding after the biopsy. For further information on this procedure, please ask for the leaflet "Having a liver biopsy".

### Is any preparation needed?

Ideally, you should not eat or drink anything for three hours before your Fibroscan. If you need to, you can take small sips of water or clear fluid, but avoid drinking large amounts. You should continue taking any prescribed medication.

**NB: if you are diabetic please eat and drink as normal to avoid low blood sugar levels.**

### Is equipment or special clothing needed?

You will not need to remove any clothing for the scan, but we will need to expose the right side of your abdomen (tummy). You will not need to remove any jewellery near the site of the scan, such as a belly button piercing.

### What happens before the Fibroscan?

You will need to book in with the clinic receptionist in the Medical Outpatient Department and then take a seat in the waiting area. You will be called into one of the consulting rooms, where you will be able to ask any questions you have about the Fibroscan. Once you have discussed the scan, providing you are happy to go ahead, you will have the test.

## What happen during the scan?

You will be asked to lie on an examination couch and place your right arm above your head. The technician will feel your abdomen to find the right place to perform the scan. He/she will place a probe on your abdomen and trigger the probe to start. The sound waves will be sent out from the probe in pulses. They will pass through your skin to your liver and bounce back. This will feel like a gentle flick against the side of your skin, it doesn't hurt. The scanner measures the time it takes for the sound wave to bounce back.

We will repeat this at least 10 times to make sure we get an accurate result. The mean (average) reading is then calculated by the scanner, which will show your doctor your liver stiffness. The scan is usually very quick, however more difficult scans can take 10-20 minutes to perform.

## What happen after the scan?

As soon as the Fibroscan is finished you will be able to either go home or return to work. The operator will give you the result immediately after the examination. The result will also be sent to the doctor who referred you for the Fibroscan.

## Where to go for the service and how to find it?

The test is performed in the Medical Outpatient Department of the Royal Devon and Exeter main Hospital, Area D, Level 1. The main reception is based near the main entrance, in the first corridor on the left after you enter the main entrance.

## Is there a waiting time?

The majority of scans can be done on the same day as part of your follow-up appointment. Fibroscan's are often pre-ordered prior to you attending your appointment as part of the referral triage, or clinic plan for follow up investigations. Sometimes you may be referred to come back for another appointment to have your Fibroscan performed.

## How often do I need to attend?

If the test result is normal, you may not need to do the test again. Depending on the results, in some cases you may need a follow-up Fibroscan.

## Do I need to bring any documents?

You will be asked to show the appointment letter once you arrive at the reception.

## Who to contact I cannot attend?

If you are unable to attend your procedure please contact us on 01392 406101 so we can rearrange your appointment.

## Are there any advantages or disadvantages that need to be explained?

The advantage of a Fibroscan is that it assesses the degree of scarring within your liver non-invasively, and gives a result in real time. This aids the management plan of your doctor. There are no specific disadvantages to this test

## Who to contact if I have any more questions?

If you have any queries please contact the Liver Specialist Nurses on 01392 406108, their office is open Monday to Friday from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm

## Getting here

### Public Transport

The hospital is easily accessible using public transport and other sustainable means of travel. We are well served by local bus routes, from across Devon. A number of services stop at the hospital, whereas others require a connection with a local bus route from Exeter City Centre.

Both the main Exeter Train stations, St David's and Exeter Central, are around 3 miles from the hospital and are served by buses that travel directly to our site. Information and the most up to date timetables can be found on:

- [www.stagecoachbus.com](http://www.stagecoachbus.com)
- [www.travelinesw.com](http://www.travelinesw.com)
- [www.traveldevon.info](http://www.traveldevon.info)

## Walking

The hospital site is around one and half miles from Exeter City centre and takes approximately 30 minutes on foot.

## Bikes

Bike paths run throughout Exeter and the hospital site is easily accessible by bike. Bike parking is available across the site, particularly outside the main hospital entrance.

## Park and Ride

There is a park and ride bus service from the Sowton Park and Ride site, which is situated just off the M5 and A30 junctions. The buses go directly to the RD&E Wonford site.

There is also the Dartline PR3 Park and ride bus which runs from Digby directly to the RD&E site.

## Car

Car parking on site is limited and can be difficult to park during peak times. We encourage visitors to use public transport and other sustainable means of travel whenever possible. If you choose to travel by car you will need to allow plenty of time to park. The car park is pay and display and can be paid for by cash or card.

There is free disabled parking near all the main entrances and at car park C. If you display your blue disabled badge in your windscreen you can park for free in our pay and display car parks.

The car parks have security attending them during hours of operation and also have CCTV in operation.

The current charges for the RD&E onsite parking at Wonford and Heavitree are as follows:

- 20 Minutes free parking
- £2.50 for up to two hours
- £4.50 for up to four hours
- £8.50 for all eight hours
- £26.00 for a weekly ticket

Please be aware that these charges are subject to change. The number of spaces is limited, so please leave plenty of time to find a space.

For further information please contact Car Parking on 01392 402358 or visit our website [www.rdehospital.nhs.uk](http://www.rdehospital.nhs.uk)

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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