

Having a penile MRI (penis scan)

This leaflet explains what a penile MRI scan entails, including the benefits and possible risks. Further general information about the MRI scan is available in your appointment letter. If you have any other queries please call the Radiology Department on 0118 322 7961.

What is a penile MRI?

Your doctor has requested a MRI scan of your penis. This is to investigate further a possible lump, pain, abnormal curvature of the penis or erectile dysfunction.

MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) is an imaging machine that captures detailed images of the body. It does not involve radiation or X-rays. Please see your appointment letter for more details of the MRI scan.

What does a penile MRI involve?

To get the best images of your penis, you will require an injection of Caverject, using a very small needle, into the base of the penis prior to the scan. Caverject is a drug called a prostaglandin E1 or 'alprostadil'. The drug induces an erection, which improves the quality of the images, making any problems easier to see.

In a cubicle, the radiologist will clean your skin using a sterile wipe and will give you the injection just before the scan – the injection usually takes about 10-20 minutes to work. The radiologist will discuss your medical history before giving the injection to check that it is safe to do so. If you have a history of heart disease, sickle cell disease, leukaemia, multiple myeloma or priapism, you may not receive the injection so it is important to inform the radiologist of any of these conditions.

Are there any side effects of Caverject?

The most common side effect is a prolonged erection (priapism). This occurs in less than 2 in 100 cases (2%). Usually the injection will start to wear off after about one hour. This will coincide with the time you will be leaving the hospital after your scan. You may wish to consider some loose clothing to protect your dignity for leaving the hospital. If your erection does not go down after 4 hours, or becomes painful, the first recommendation is to walk up and down the stairs for 10 minutes (to attempt to divert the blood away from the penis) or have a cold shower. If this does not help, you should go immediately to your nearest Emergency Department (A&E), taking this information sheet with you and telling them that you have recently had a Caverject injection.

Minor discomfort and bruising can occur at the injection site but there should be no long-term effects.

Where can I get more information?

- www.baus.org.uk/_userfiles/pages/files/Patients/Leaflets/Penile%20injection%20for%20erection.pdf
- www.caverject.com/faqs
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=zl43TEmF8GA

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RAD_0094

Radiology Department, September 2023

Next review due: September 2025