



Having an oesophageal emptying study as an outpatient

This scan is performed to evaluate oesophageal emptying, reflux or hold up with the passage of food to the stomach (how long it takes for your food pipe to carry food towards your stomach and whether it comes back up).

Is it safe for me to have the scan?

You will be fed some cornflakes made with a small quantity of radiotracer in the milk, in order to take the pictures. There is a very small risk from this radiation dose but this is outweighed by the valuable information that will be gained by having the scan. There is a table at the end of this leaflet giving radiation risks from various sources. Ask if you want any more information. All investigations are vetted to make sure this is the appropriate test for you. If you don't understand why you need to have this scan please speak to the doctor who referred you.

For female patients

If you know that you are pregnant, or there is any chance that you may be pregnant, then please contact the department where you will be having the scan. **Do this as soon as possible as the scan can be postponed if it is not urgent. Also, please contact the department if you are breastfeeding**, as we may give you special instructions.

Preparation for your scan

You must have nothing to eat for **6 hours before the test**. You may drink water. If you are diabetic and/or will find this difficult, please contact the department.

Your scan

You will be fed a meal of radioactive cornflakes with milk while sitting in front of a camera and pictures will be taken over the following 30 minutes approximately. You do not need to get undressed for this test.

After your scan

It is very unlikely that you will feel any side-effects after the scan, but if you think that you have please let the Medical Physics Department know.

You may continue all your normal activities unless you have been advised otherwise. After your scan there will be some radioactivity left in your body but this will not present a significant risk to other people around you. The radioactivity in your body will soon disappear, but if you continue to drink plenty of liquids this will help clear the radioactivity more quickly.

Your results

Your oesophageal emptying scan will be looked at by a specialist doctor, who will issue a report. The report will be sent to the doctor who requested your scan rather than to your GP. This is because the doctor who requested your scan will have all the results from other tests and will be able to tell you how the result of your scan affects your care.

Contacting us

Medical Physics Department, Level 1 North Block, Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00pm. If you have any questions about your treatment, please ask the staff looking after you or telephone 0118 322 7355 or email: rbb-tr.physics@nhs.net

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

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

RBFT Physics & Clinical Engineering Department, April 2024

Next review due: April 2026

The table below is a simple guide to the levels of radiation risks for various examinations. These are measured in millisieverts (mSv).

| Source of exposure (using RBFT local diagnostic reference levels (DRLs) for Nuclear Medicine) | Dose |
|---|------------------|
| Having a chest x-ray | 0.014 mSv |
| Taking a transatlantic flight | 0.08 mSv |
| Oesophageal emptying | 0.9 mSv |
| UK average annual radiation dose | 2.7 mSv |
| CT scan of the chest – CT scan of whole spine | 6.6 mSv – 10 mSv |