

What are Staging investigations?

Patient information

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If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

What are staging investigations

It is now important to carry out some further tests, so a decision can be made as to what treatment/intervention is right for you. These are known as staging investigations.

The following is a list and description of some investigations you may need. Not all of the following tests may be appropriate for you. Your consultant/nurse will let you know which are necessary for you.

Computed Tomography (CT) scan

CT scans are investigations that can be used to help to make a diagnosis or assess the effects of treatment. This is a type of x-ray, but shows the body in slices and produces a more detailed picture. This will be done as an outpatient and is a painless procedure.

What happens on the day will largely depend on what type of scan you are having. For example, if your appointment is for a CT scan of your abdomen or pelvis, you maybe given a jug of contrast (dye) to drink. This is to help make the images clearer.

Most CT scans require you to have intravenous contrast (dye) to increase the quality of information obtained from the scan. A small cannula will be placed in your arm or hand prior to the scan and contrast will be injected through this.

Notes

How to contact us

If you are currently attending Whiston, St Helens, Southport or Ormskirk hospitals ask your doctor or nurse to contact us.

If you are at home you can reach us on the following contact numbers:

Whiston & St Helens: 0151 430 1189

Southport & Ormskirk: 01704 704 696

Our normal working hours are:

Whiston & St Helens:

Monday to Friday, 8.00am until 5.00pm with the exception of bank holiday.

Southport & Ormskirk:

Monday to Friday 8.30am until 4.30pm with the exception of bank holidays.

Outside of these hours please leave us a message on our voicemail facility which will be reviewed the next working day.

After the contrast injection or drink (if given), you will be asked to lie still on the scanner while the radiographer takes the CT images. CT scans are not usually long examinations – the scan itself takes about 15 minutes but the preparation (drinking water and being cannulated) takes time as well.

Gastroscopy

You may have had this test before, but it is sometimes necessary to repeat it again in order to obtain a more accurate measurement of an abnormal area or obtain further biopsies.

Endoscopic ultrasound

This is a special scan of your gullet (oesophagus). It is performed in a similar way to your gastroscopy.

You are given sedation for the procedure and it usually takes approximately 10 minutes to do. This will give your consultant more information of your disease than the gastroscopy alone.

Positron Emission Tomography (PET)

This is a sensitive, sophisticated scanner that produces images that can identify small abnormal areas, that may be undetected on other tests. You may need a PET scan following your CT scan; your consultant/specialist nurse will let you know if you need to have this test done.

You will be nil by mouth 6 hours before the test (except water) and when you arrive for your PET scan, you will be given an injection of a tracer that helps detect any abnormalities. Once the tracer has been injected, it will be necessary for you to lie down and relax for approximately one hour while the tracer is absorbed into your body. You will then be scanned in a similar way to the CT scan.

Laparoscopy

This is carried out under a general anaesthetic and is not always necessary. This procedure involves inserting a laparoscope (telescope) through a small incision in the abdomen; air is then pumped in to expand the space inside enabling the surgeon to have a clear view of your internal organs. Small samples may be taken from the lining of your stomach to send to the laboratory for testing.

Pulmonary function

This is to measure how well your lungs are working and to discover if you have any breathing difficulties. The test involves blowing into a special machine, which records your respiratory capacity.

Echocardiogram

This is scan of the heart. It is a painless procedure that is carried out as an outpatient. This looks at the function of the chambers of the heart.

Blood count

These are requested so we can detect any drop in your Hb (blood count) and monitor the function of some of your other body organs. If your Hb is low, we can prescribe treatments to resolve this problem. They also help to assess if you have any deficits in your nutritional requirements, which may require replenishing before commencing treatment.