

# CT Colonography with Plenvu®

This leaflet answers some of the questions you may have about having a Computed Tomography Colonography (CTC) scan. The first part explains the risks and the benefits of this test and what you can expect when you come to hospital. The second part explains how to prepare for this procedure. It is important to read both parts. Please refer to your appointment letter for the time and location of your procedure.

If you have more questions at any time, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff.

## Important information about your medication and procedure

- Seven days before the procedure, stop taking iron tablets.
- Take all other medication as usual, including for diabetes, unless your doctor has advised you otherwise.
- If you take oral contraceptives, please use other forms of contraception for the remainder of that cycle following bowel preparation.
- **2 DAYS before your procedure – commence with the special diet described on pages 8-9.**
- **The day before your procedure – You can have a light breakfast & light lunch taking foods from the special diet.**
- **Do not eat any solid food after 3pm the day before your procedure.**
- **At 5pm the day before your procedure, start to take the bowel preparation as per the instructions on page 6.**
  
- **DRINK PLENTY OF CLEAR FLUIDS FOR 2 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR PROCEDURE**

# Part 1

## What is a CTC scan?

It is a type of x-ray that allows us to take 3D pictures of your large bowel (colon) and abdomen (tummy). It is also known as a virtual colonoscopy.

You lie on a scanning table and will have scans in two or three positions: on your back, on your side or laying on your front. So, that we can get a good view of the bowel, before the scan we need to put some carbon dioxide gas into your colon to make it expand. We put the gas in through a small, thin tube that is put into your rectum (bottom).

## Why do I need this procedure?

Your hospital specialist has recommended you have this test. You usually have it to help us find the cause of your symptoms and to make a diagnosis. It is important that you understand why you are having this test. If you are not clear about the reasons, please check with the senior radiographer who sees you on the day of your test.

## How long does it take?

The scan usually takes about 20-30 minutes, but you should expect to be at the hospital for about one hour.

## Are there any alternatives?

Other tests include a colonoscopy. We cannot take samples with a CTC so if we find abnormalities you may need a colonoscopy. Discuss with the doctor who sent you for your CTC whether the other tests are more appropriate.

## What are the benefits?

CTC is less invasive than a conventional colonoscopy and you might find that you can tolerate this procedure much more easily as it causes less discomfort and is quicker. A CTC can help us to reach a diagnosis to make sure we give you the best treatment or confirm you are already on the best treatment.

## What are the risks?

This test is very safe and serious complications are very rare. The main risks are:

- **Mild abdominal discomfort and bloating:** You may feel bloated and have tummy discomfort when the gas is put into your colon. We will check you during your procedure to make sure you are not too uncomfortable. The gas is absorbed quickly by your body and the symptoms do not take long to pass when the tubing is taken out of your bottom.
- **Dry mouth and blurred vision:** You may be given an antispasmodic drug to relax your muscles and make the scan more comfortable. This can make your mouth feel

dry and your sight slightly blurred. These symptoms normally last for about 15-20 minutes.

- **Eye pain and redness:** Very rarely, the antispasmodic drug can cause eye pain or redness up to 24 hours after your test. If this happens, go immediately to your nearest Accident & Emergency department (A&E) for a check-up.
- **Bowel perforation:** There is a very rare risk less than 1% (about 1 in 3,000) of damaging your bowel during the test. If this happens, your bowel usually heals without treatment. But you may need to be admitted to hospital and observed in case you need surgery to repair the damage.

If you have any of the following symptoms within four days of your scan, please seek urgent medical advice from your GP. Out of hours, go straight to your nearest Emergency Department.

- Severe abdominal (tummy) pain
- Painful tummy discomfort that gets worse
- Sweating and nausea
- Feeling generally unwell

When you have a CT scan you are exposed to a small amount of x-ray radiation equal to the natural radiation you get naturally from the atmosphere over about three years. The risk from this radiation dose is very low. **If you are, or think you may be, pregnant, you must call the department before your scan on 020 8725 2474.**

## Is it painful?

No, but you may have some mild tummy discomfort and bloating during the procedure from the gas we put in your colon.

## Giving my consent

Before you have your scan, our staff will ask you your name and date of birth and we will also ask you to confirm your address.

We must by law obtain your written consent prior to any operation and some other procedures beforehand. Staff will explain the risks, benefits, and alternatives before they ask you to sign the consent form.

If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure or treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to speak with a senior member of staff again.

## Do I need to stop taking my medication?

If you take iron tablets, stop taking them seven days before your test.

If you are taking any other medications, including for diabetes, in general you can take these as usual, unless your doctor has advised you otherwise.

If you take oral contraceptives the diarrhoea may reduce their effectiveness. Continue taking oral contraceptives but use other forms of contraception for the remainder of that cycle.

If you have any questions about medication, you are already taking, please contact the doctor that has referred you for the test.

## **Information for Diabetics**

If you have diabetes, please ensure that you discuss this procedure with your diabetes nurse specialist at your GP surgery or in hospital.

You can continue to take your tablets or your insulin as usual, including on the morning of the scan. However, you may be at risk of a hypoglycemic episode which is associated with a low blood sugar level.

Symptoms of this include shaking, sweating, blurred vision and dizziness. For this reason, it is important that you continue to check your blood sugar levels and, if your sugar is low, have sugary and high energy drinks. Please make sure that you bring something to eat and drink for after the scan.

## **Do I need to prepare for the CTC?**

We need to get a clear view of the inside of your colon so it must be as clean as possible. If we cannot get a clear view you may need to have the test again.

In the two days before your test, you need to:

- eat a special diet as per the instructions on pages 8-9.
- drink a solution to help clean your colon as per the instructions on page 6.

## **What happens before the procedure?**

We will ask you to use the toilet and to change into a hospital gown. You can bring a dressing gown to wear if you like.

You may have a cannula (thin plastic tube) put into a vein in your arm before you go into the scan room. You may get some bruising or swelling around the area where the cannula was inserted, but this should go away after a few days. The cannula is so we can give you a muscle relaxant during the procedure. It helps to reduce spasms in your bowel wall and can make the examination more comfortable. We may also use the cannula to inject a special x-ray dye (contrast medium) into your vein so we can get a better look at your colon. The dye usually causes you to feel a warm 'flush' pass around your body.

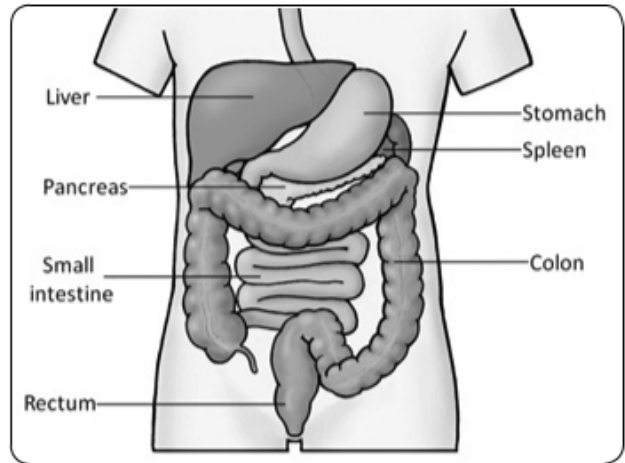
## **What happens during the procedure?**

When you go into the scanning room, we will ask you some questions and explain the procedure to you. You can ask us questions at any time.

We will ask you to lie on your side on the scanning table. A senior radiographer will place a small, thin

tube into your rectum (bottom). They then use a special machine to fill your colon with carbon dioxide gas through this tube.

When there is enough gas in your colon, you will have two scans: one with you lying on your back and one with you lying either on your side or on your tummy. Sometimes you may have a third scan so we can see the whole of your colon clearly.



## What happens after the procedure?

- As soon as the scan is complete you can go to the toilet and eat as normal.
- We suggest you drink extra fluids for the next 3 hours following your CT scan to prevent dehydration.
- We recommend you stay with in the hospital for 30 minutes following your injection to make sure you are feeling well before you leave.
- If you are currently breastfeeding, you can continue to do so.

## How do I get my results?

Because the Radiologist (X-ray Doctor) needs to study the images very carefully, we cannot give you the results straight away.

The results will be sent to the Clinician who referred you for the scan, normally within 10 days. You will get the results when you have a follow-up out-patient appointment. Your results will not be available directly to you from this department.

## Who can I contact with queries and concerns?

If you have any questions, please contact us on 020 8725 2472 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm).

If you cannot keep your appointment, please call, or email the department as soon as possible. Our telephone numbers are on your appointment letter, and our email address is:

[RadiologyDepartment@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:RadiologyDepartment@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

# Part 2

## Preparation for your CT Colonography

There are two sections to this information:

**Section 1** is about the Plenvu® and Omnipaque® solutions you need to take for the procedure.

**Section 2** gives you diet instructions.

Please read both parts carefully and follow the important instructions.

### Section 1 Plenvu® and Omnipaque®

#### What is Plenvu® and Omnipaque®, and why do I need to take it?

Your medical team has arranged for you to have a CTC to assess your large bowel.

Plenvu® bowel preparation is a strong laxative which will help to clear your bowel and allow internal structures to be seen more clearly. As Plenvu® has very little taste, it is better taken cold from the fridge. You may wish to add clear fruit cordial, such as orange or lime squash, to make it more pleasant to drink.

Omnipaque® is a liquid that contains iodine and appears white on CT. This coats the inside of your bowel and allows internal structures to be seen more clearly. For this examination the Omnipaque® is to be taken orally, i.e., swallowed as a liquid.

### How to take Plenvu® and Omnipaque®

**The day before your procedure** you need to do the following:

**12pm** – From 12pm (midday), have clear fluids only. This includes drinks such as water, squash, black tea/ coffee and clear soup. You may suck boiled sweets and / or clear mints.

Prepare each 500ml of your Plenvu® as follows:

- At **12pm (midday)**, **make up your first 500ml of Plenvu®** (Dose 1 sachet) and sip this slowly over 30 minutes. It is important to drink an additional 500ml of water or clear fluids over 30 minutes alongside each dose of Plenvu®.
- At **4pm**, **make up your second 500ml of Plenvu®** (Dose 2; sachets A and B) and sip this slowly over 30 minutes. It is important to drink an additional 500ml of water or clear fluids over 30 minutes as well as the Plenvu® solution. Allow **2 hours** for Plenvu® to work after finishing the second dose. You can go to bed when you stop going to the toilet.
- At **7pm** take **50mls of Omnipaque®**. You can either drink it neat or dilute it with a small amount of squash.

## Hints and tips on taking Plenvu®

- Sip slowly over 30 minutes.
- Once dissolved, (this may take up to 8 minutes), the solution can be refrigerated.
- Try using a straw.
- Stay hydrated with plenty of clear fluids.

**On the day of your procedure, do not have anything else to eat or drink anything until after your procedure.**

## Does Plenvu® and Omnipaque® have any side effects?

After you drink Plenvu®, you will have lots of watery bowel movements. This is perfectly normal and shows that it is working. It is advisable to stay near a toilet because you may need to use it urgently. Bowel movements usually stop soon after you have finished taking Plenvu®.

Response to Plenvu® varies considerably with each person. Some people will start to open their bowels within 1 hour, for others, it may take hours to work.

In some people, Plenvu® or Omnipaque® can cause nausea and vomiting, skin rashes and very rarely an anaphylactic/allergic type reaction. If you feel unwell, please contact the department, or attend ED if you are concerned.

## Caution:

**Keep all tablets and medicines out of the reach of children. Never give any medicines prescribed for you to anyone else.**

If you are taking beta-blockers, any hypersensitivity or allergic type reaction can be aggravated. Please contact us if this happens.

## Section 2 Diet Instructions (2 days before the procedure)

You are required to follow a **low fibre diet for 2 days before the procedure**. What you have to eat will improve the performance of the bowel preparation and the diagnostic accuracy of the examination.

Do not have any solid food after lunchtime on the day before the procedure. You can still have clear fluids.

Do not eat any solid food on the morning of the CTC.

**Suggested menu before the procedure.** Further allowed options are detailed in the table provided.

**Two days prior:**

**Breakfast:** White toast with butter or honey  
**Lunch:** Soup with white toast  
**Dinner:** Grilled fish or chicken with white rice

**One day prior:**

**Drink** AT LEAST ¼ pint (150mls) of fluid every hour during the daytime.  
**Breakfast:** Boiled or poached egg, white toast  
**12pm (midday)** Take the first dose of Plenvu®  
**Lunch:** Scrambled eggs on white toast  
**From 3pm:** Have clear fluids only  
**At 4pm:** Take the second dose of Plenvu®  
**At 7pm:** Take the Omnipaque

**Morning of the CT procedure -**

**Do not have anything else to eat or drink anything until after your procedure.  
After the scan you may eat and drink normally. Please bring a light snack with you to eat after the scan is complete.**

	<b>ALLOWED</b>	<b>PLEASE AVOID</b>
<b>Dairy</b>	Limited to 1 cup per day. Use low fat products; milk, plain yoghurt, butter/margarine. Including plant-based alternatives.	Yoghurt with fruit skins or seeds; strongly flavoured cheeses
<b>Meat / protein</b>	Plainly prepared (steamed/boiled/ grilled); chicken, fish, eggs, tofu.	Red meat (pork, beef), pink fish eg salmon, added fats, gravy
<b>Potato / Pasta / Rice</b>	White rice, spaghetti, noodles /macaroni, potato with no skin, potato gnocchi	Potato with skin, brown rice/ pasta, lentils
<b>Bread / Cereal</b>	Products made from white flour for example white bread, white pasta, crumpets, English muffins, wraps, pitta bread, bagels.	Any brown bread products or products containing coarse grains, seeds or nuts or dried fruit such as multigrain bread, seeded batch, rye crispbread, rough oatcakes, muesli bars, flapjacks, teacakes, scones, fruit loaves, bran, cornmeal.

<b>Vegetables</b>	Clear soup	Whole vegetables (raw or cooked), mushrooms, sweet corn, salad, any type of beans,
<b>Fruit / Fruit Juices</b>	Clear fruit juices, canned fruit (no seeds or skin)	Raw fruits, raisins, dried fruits, prunes / prune juice, dates skins
<b>Drinks</b>	Decaffeinated coffee, tea, herbal tea, carbonated/fizzy drinks. Water, squash, Bovril.	All others
<b>Soup</b>	Clear strained soups (no solid bits) Strained chicken noodle soup	All others
<b>Dessert</b>	Jelly, fruit ice, vanilla ice-cream	Coconut, nuts, seeds, whole fruit, popcorn.
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Salt, pepper, jelly, sugar, honey, golden syrup, plain chocolate (no fruit or nuts), boiled sweets.	Garlic, cloves, seed spices. Any strongly flavoured spice or sauce - chilli sauce, pickle, barbecue sauce, mustard, jam, marmalade, peanut butter

## Useful sources of information

For further information please see:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/CT-scan](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/CT-scan)

British Institute of Radiology, X-rays and their safety:

[www.bir.org.uk/useful-information/about-you-scan](http://www.bir.org.uk/useful-information/about-you-scan)

For further information about breastfeeding please see:

[www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/ct](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/ct)

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer).

**Telephone Number:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

### **NHS Choices**

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### **NHS 111**

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Telephone Number:** 111

### **AccessAble**

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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