



Information for
patients and
carers

**Magnetic Resonance Imaging
(MRI) Scan**

Receiving an injection of Gadolinium
(Contrast dye)

This leaflet contains information about Gadolinium, which is the key component of the contrast (dye) used during MRI scans.

Gadolinium is only used when diagnostic information is essential and not available without unenhanced MRI.

Further information about the contrast may also be found in the manufacturer's information leaflet, please ask us if you would like a copy.

What is Gadolinium?

Gadolinium is a clear, colourless to pale yellow fluid that is used during an MRI scan to enhance the contrast of the pictures which can improve the examination of some areas of the body. A Specialist Radiographer (a specially trained health care professional who performs the MRI scan) will administer this contrast agent to you if it is decided that you need it.

How is it given?

Gadolinium is injected into one of your veins via a cannula (a thin plastic tube) during your scan. The cannula is inserted through your skin into a vein using a needle. Once the cannula is in place the needle is removed, leaving the thin plastic tube in the vein. This should be comfortable and will only be in place until your scan is finished. In some circumstances, the Gadolinium is injected into a vein via a peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC) line.

Is MRI contrast safe?

Gadolinium is not suitable for everybody. The Radiographer or Consultant Radiologist will decide if it is appropriate for you.

In people who have severely reduced kidney function, Gadolinium should only be used with Radiologist approval. This group of patients cannot excrete Gadolinium through urine and the retained Gadolinium may cause problems.

It is important that you tell the Radiographer before your scan if you have any history of kidney problems.

Gadolinium is unlikely to be given to you if you have recently had or soon expect to have a liver transplant.

As with all medication, a very small number of patients may be allergic to MRI contrast. Allergic reactions are rare. When they do occur, most of them are mild. The Radiographer will discuss possible reactions with you at your appointment. Please inform the Radiographer if you have had a previous allergic reaction to a contrast dye or have felt unwell after an injection of contrast dye.

Most reactions occur within 30 minutes of the contrast being injected, but they can happen up to several days following the injection. You will be asked to remain in the MRI department for 30 minutes following the injection of the contrast agent.

If you have any allergic disorders, bronchial asthma, suffer with seizures or you are being treated for epilepsy, your chances of an allergic reaction can be increased, however, the chances are still very small.

It is known that small amounts of Gadolinium may remain in the brain or other tissues after an injection, although there is currently no evidence that these small amounts cause any harm.

Occasionally the injection may leak out from the vein to the tissues under the skin. This is known as extravasation. If this happens, you will experience a stinging sensation where the contrast has gone into the tissue and it can be painful. This is rare and your cannula will be tested with a saline (water) solution to reduce the risk of extravasation before the contrast is injected.

You are advised to keep well hydrated for 24 hours following an injection of contrast dye.

Can I have an injection of Gadolinium if I am pregnant?

You will be asked about the possibility of pregnancy as part of the safety screening before any MRI scan and before an injection of contrast dye. If you are pregnant or possibly pregnant, it is unlikely that you will have a Gadolinium injection unless it is **essential**. If a Gadolinium injection is recommended, this would be discussed with you and your doctor before giving you the injection.

Can I have an injection of Gadolinium if I am breastfeeding?

Although the amount of contrast dye received by your baby is very small, continuing or stopping breastfeeding for 24 hours after the injection is your decision doctor.

Contact details

If you have a query about the MRI scan, injection or have any other questions, worries or doubts, do not hesitate to contact us prior to your appointment on **01772 523999**.

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

Gujarati:

આ માહિતીને સમજવામાં સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો. આ માહિતી મોટા છપાણામાં અને અન્ય ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ કરી શકાય છે.

Romanian:

Vă rugăm să întrebați dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru înțelegerea acestor informații. Aceste informații pot fi puse la dispoziție în format mare și în alte limbi.”

Polish:

Poinformuj nas, jeśli potrzebna jest ci pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji. Informacje te można również udostępnić dużym drukiem oraz w innych językach

Punjabi:

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵੱਲ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਯਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

Urdu:

دو سر ی زبانوں او ر بڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو
یہی چھپا یم یو ابی دست بو یسکت ہے برا ے مہر یان پو ی چھہی۔ معلومات

Arabic:

مطبوعه بأحر ف كبير ة و بلغات إذا كنت تر يد مسا عدة في فهم هذه لمعلومات يُر جى أن تطلب
أخرى يمكن تو فسير هذه المعلومات

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Division: Diagnostics and Clinical Support
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