



Information for
patients and
carers

DEXA Scan

What is a DEXA Scan?

A DEXA (Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry) scan is a way of measuring bone density. It can give information about signs of thinning of the bones known as osteoporosis. Osteoporosis can lead to weakened bones which may be more likely to break. For more information on osteoporosis you may wish to visit the website of the Royal Osteoporosis Society www.theros.org.uk

Please inform us before you attend:

- If you are or think you may be pregnant
- If you are breastfeeding
- If you weigh over 150kg (23 ½ stone)
- If you have problems standing and/or need a hoist to transfer
- If you have mobility problems
- If you have had a DEXA scan within the last 2 years
- If you are due to have a Nuclear Medicine scan, CT scan or Barium X-ray study within a week prior to your appointment for a DEXA scan

Preparation for the scan

There are no special preparations for a DEXA scan so you can eat, drink and take any medication as normal. It would be helpful if you could wear clothes without zips, buttons, fasteners, belts or diamantes on to minimise the need to get changed for the examination. Also, if possible do not wear an underwired bra. If you have a navel piercing, please ensure it is removed prior to attending.

Can I bring a relative or friend with me?

A relative or friend can accompany you to the hospital but they will usually not be allowed into the room when you have your examination. Please note that as we have limited seating and do not have child care facilities, you are advised not to bring small children with you to your

appointment. If you are unable to avoid this, please contact us in advance of your appointment.

What happens when I arrive?

Please report to the reception desk in the MRI Department on the lower ground floor to book in for your appointment.

What happens during the examination?

The radiographer will check whether you will need to change for your scan and will provide you with a gown if necessary. You will be weighed and will have your height measured before you are scanned.



You will be asked to lie on your back on the scan table in the position shown in the image below, with your legs raised. The scanner arm will pass over you to measure the bone density in your hip and spine, this can take approximately 20 minutes. The radiographer will stay in the room with you during the scan. In some circumstances the forearm and full spine is also scanned.

Is it safe to have a DEXA scan?

There are some small risks involved with X-rays but only the minimum amount of radiation is used to produce the images required. We use the smallest dose possible, in line with national regulations, to provide as much information as we can about your condition. This allows the doctors to make an accurate diagnosis to help plan your treatment, so the benefits of having the X-ray far outweigh the radiation dose you will receive.

After the scan

The scans will be checked to ensure they provide all the information required and you will then be able to leave the department.

Your results

The scans will be analysed after your visit. You will be advised when you attend about how to receive your results.

Contact Information

If you require any further advice or information please contact the DEXA department on **01772 522096**.

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.theros.org.uk Royal Osteoporosis Society

Further information about radiation:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/ionising-radiation-from-medical-imaging-examinations-safety-advice/exposure-to-ionising-radiation-from-medical-imaging-safety-advice

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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Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking this will include Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal and the opportunity to speak to a nurse or advisor from the specialist Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team.

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 છપાણ માં 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 ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

Urdu:

دو سر ی زبانوں او ر بڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے یل مدد ی ضرورت ہے تو ی چھپا یں ی ابی دست ہو ی سکت ہے برا ئ مہر یان پو ی چھہی۔ معلومات

Arabic:

مطبوعه بأ حرف كبرية و بلغات إذا كنت تريد مساعدة في فهم هذه لمعلومات يُرجى أن تطلب أخرى يمكن توفير هذه المعلومات

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Division: Diagnostics and Clinical Support
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