

## Cystogram

A member of your multidisciplinary team (MDT) has recommended that you have a cystogram. This information sheet explains what to expect when you come into the hospital, what the procedure involves, the possible risks and aftercare advice.

### What is a cystogram?

A cystogram is a fluoroscopy procedure (an examination performed under x-ray guidance) to visualise the structure of your bladder. There are a number of reasons why your doctor may have requested you to have this examination including:

- Repeated urinary tract infections
- Structural problems such as leakage of urine from the bladder to the surrounding tissues
- Blockages which may cause painful urination
- Assessment of the bladder as part of the 'trial without catheter' procedure
- A follow up procedure to examine the bladder and urethra following surgery.

### How long will it take?

The procedure will take approximately 20 minutes, however in some cases it may take longer.

### When you arrive

Please report to the reception desk in the x-ray department with your appointment letter. The reception staff will show you where to wait until a radiographer or other member of staff comes to collect you.

Upon collection, we will escort you to an x-ray room and ask you to change into a hospital gown and to remove any metal objects from the area that is to be examined (jewellery, zip, metallic fastenings and so on). You will be cared for by a small team including a radiologist and a radiographer.

### What does this examination involve?

Contrast medium (a dye that shows up on x-rays) will be injected through a catheter (small plastic tube) to fill up your bladder, and images will be taken in various positions. The radiologist and radiographer will be with you at all times to assist you. If you do not have a catheter in place, the area will be cleaned and the radiologist will coat the catheter using a lubricant and then insert this into the bladder. You may have some discomfort whilst the catheter is being inserted.



When the x-ray contrast is injected into your bladder, you may experience a feeling of fullness in your bladder and/or an urge to empty your bladder. Some people also experience discomfort whilst emptying their bladder immediately after their exam. This usually stops within a few hours.

### **What preparation do I need?**

There is no preparation required for this exam. Upon arrival you may be asked to empty your bladder and/or your catheter bag.

If you have a stoma or catheter, you **must** bring a spare clean bag with you on the day of your exam.

Prior to the procedure, the doctor will explain the procedure and you can ask any questions which you may have.

If you have any allergies, you must tell your doctor. If you have previously reacted to intravenous contrast medium (the dye used for kidney x-ray and CT scans) also let your doctors know.

Patients should inform the x-ray staff if they are or might be pregnant before the day of the procedure.

### **After the examination**

Once the procedure is over, we will remove the catheter and advise you to empty your bladder. You may eat and drink as normal, however it is also advisable to drink plenty of fluids. This helps to flush the x-ray contrast out of your bladder.

If you have arrived in the ward for a 'trial without catheter' procedure, we will ask you to return to the ward for your aftercare. You can usually go home later on in the day.

### **When will I get the results?**

The radiologist will examine the images and send a report on the findings to your referring doctor within seven days of your examination unless you are having a 'trial without catheter' procedure, in which case your results will be available the same day.

### **Are there any risks or side effects?**

The contrast dye that is used contains iodine which some people are allergic to. If you have had an allergic reaction to x-ray contrast in the past or if you have a known allergy to iodine, you must tell your doctor. Alternatively, contact the x-ray department on the numbers below.

We will expose you to ionising radiation when we carry out this examination. We are all exposed to ionising radiation from naturally occurring sources such as cosmic rays, certain types of soil and rocks and even food we eat. Ionising radiation can cause cell damage that in turn, after many years, may turn cancerous. The radiation associated with your exam will therefore carry a small risk which is less than 0.1%. This risk will be far outweighed by the benefits of having this exposure. We will also tailor the amount of radiation we use to you.



Usually there are no prolonged or late side effects from the procedure. If you become unwell after your procedure when you get home, you can either contact your GP or your local Accident and Emergency department.

### **Can I bring a relative or friend?**

Yes, but for safety reasons they will not be able to accompany you into the x-ray room except in very special circumstances.

### **Contact details**

If you have any questions or concerns about your procedure, or you are unable to attend this appointment, please call the Radiology Department (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm) on:

Chelsea: 020 7808 2571

Sutton: 020 8661 3736

Alternatively, please call:

**The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline:** 020 8915 6899

(available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

