

Skeletal survey within the Radiology Department

Radiology

Information for patients and carers

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Caring for you

This leaflet provides information for those with parental responsibility for children who need X-rays and scans when there are concerns for a child's welfare.

Why are these tests needed?

If there are concerns about your child, we need to check for injuries. Injuries in younger children and babies can be difficult to find.

For example, bruising on the surface of the brain can happen without any visible injury to the outside of the head. Similarly, bones may be broken without any obvious external signs.

X-rays and scans can help to diagnose these injuries.

What X-rays and scans are needed?

A baby or young child will need a skeletal survey X-ray examination and may need a CT head scan. Other tests may also be needed, such as ultrasound and MRI scans.

What is a skeletal survey?

A skeletal survey is a set of X-rays of the whole body. It will involve about 25 separate images. The X-rays are like photographs of the area and will not cause any pain to your child. The test happens over 2 visits, about 2 weeks apart.

You will get an appointment for the second visit after the first.

Who will do the skeletal survey?

The X-rays are done in the Radiology Department at Warrington Hospital.



What happens at the first appointment?

- Your child must keep still for each picture. You may be asked to help hold your child still.
- You may want to bring your child's favourite toy or comforter to help with this. We also have toys to help.
- Some children need sedation, but we will talk to you about this before the test.

- Remove clothes or metal items that show on X-rays (like poppers on bodysuits).
- You will wear a protective apron to reduce the radiation you receive.
- Please tell us if you are pregnant. You cannot hold your child if you are pregnant.

It is normal for children to cry or become upset because they need to stay still. You can comfort your child between pictures.

When will the results be available?

Radiographers cannot give results. Two consultant radiologists will review the images. The paediatrician looking after your child will discuss the results with you.

What happens on the second appointment?

Sometimes recent injuries only show up later. The skeletal survey is not complete until a shorter second series of X-rays has been taken. You should make sure that your child returns for the second appointment (around 11 to 14 days after the first series). You will be given an appointment to bring your child back for this. The process is very similar to the first appointment.

What happens if my child has a CT head scan?

A CT scan takes pictures of the brain and skull. The scan is relatively quick, but your child will need to lie very still. If you are **not** pregnant you may be able to stay with your child. Sometimes sedation may be used to help to keep your child still.

Radiographers cannot give results. A consultant radiologist will report the scan. The paediatrician will discuss the results with you.



What happens if my child has an MRI scan?

Your child may need to have an MRI scan of their brain and spine. The MRI scanner looks like a CT scanner, but the inside is more like a tunnel.

An MRI scan can take up to 1 hour and is noisy. Your child will need to be perfectly still for this and may need sedation. The doctor will explain to you the details of the sedation before your child has the MRI.

We will ask you for consent (agreement) to this procedure. The MRI radiographers will go through a checklist with you to ensure that it is safe for you and your child to be in close contact with the MRI magnet.

Radiographers cannot give results. A consultant radiologist will report the scan. The paediatrician will discuss the results with you.

Need more information?

Please ask your nurse, doctor or radiographer. You can also call the Radiology Department on 01925 662060.