Having a scan to look for any blood clots in your lungs (pulmonary embolism)

Respiratory Medicine

Information for Patients

You have been referred to the Ambulatory pulmonary embolism clinic to make sure you do not have a pulmonary embolism (PE). The clinic is based in the same day emergency care unit (SDEC) at Glenfield Hospital, the closest entrance to here would be the south entrance.

We will call you, usually the next working day, with an appointment time to come to the clinic, if you have not heard from us by midday (12noon) please call the hospital and ask them to put you through to our extension:

0300 303 1573 ext 12231

Or contact the Clinical Decisions Unit (CDU) on 0116 258 3718.

What is a pulmonary embolism?

A pulmonary embolism (PE) is a blockage in one of the blood vessels in the lungs. It happens when part, or all, of a blood clot blocks the blood supply to your lungs. Most cases of PE develop when a blood clot travels in the bloodstream from the deep veins in your legs and up into your lungs. A blood clot in the leg is called a deep vein thrombosis (DVT).

Symptoms may include:

- Breathlessness, which may come on suddenly, or gradually
- Chest pain, which may be worse when you breathe in
- Coughing up blood

The above symptoms could be caused by many things. For example, the pain may just be a muscular ache or there could be an infection. You will have tests which will help us decide what is causing your symptoms so they can then be treated.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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Treatment to thin the blood may have been started in the form of a heparin injection.

What tests will I have?

You have been referred to the clinic for further assessments and tests

There are 2 types of scans which can be done:

1. **Computerised Tomography Pulmonary Angiography (CTPA)**

    A dye is injected into the blood vessels of your lungs and a computerised tomography (CT) scan is taken. A CT scan works by taking X-rays to create a highly detailed image of the inside of your body.

2. **Ventilation Perfusion (VQ) scan**

    A ventilation scan measures the amount of air and the blood flow in your lungs. If there is a part of your lung with air in it but no blood supply, it may be the result of a PE.

You will be prepared for your scan and shown where to go, after having the scan you will return to the PE clinic to wait for the results, it is difficult to say how long your appointment will take but the nurses in the clinic will keep you updated with what is happening.

You can eat and drink as normal before and after your scan.

If I become unwell at home, what should I do?

A pulmonary embolism can be a serious condition. If your symptoms get worse (worsening pain or shortness of breath, dizziness or bleeding) then please get medical advice straight away by calling 111 or the Clinical Decisions Unit if you were referred to the PE clinic from there. Tell them you are being investigated for a pulmonary embolism as an outpatient and they will arrange for you to come back to hospital for a check up.

In the event of an emergency dial 999

Previous reference:

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

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