

Having an X-ray test to look your urethra (urethrogram)

Department of Radiology

Information for Patients

Last reviewed: October 2023

Next review: October 2026

Leaflet number: 52 Version: 6

Introduction

This leaflet tells you about the X-ray test called a urethrogram.

If you are an outpatient please read your appointment letter carefully to check which hospital your appointment is at.

What is a urethrogram?

The urethra is the tube that carries pee from your bladder to the outside of your body. The opening of the urethra is either in front of the vagina or the end of the penis.

urethrogram means X-ray pictures of the urethra.

A urethrogram is an special X-ray test to show the inside (anatomy) of the urethra. This is to see if there is a narrowing (called a stricture), a tear or any abnormal connection between the urethra and nearby organs.

How to I get ready for the examination?

You do not need to do anything special to get ready.

You can eat and drink as usual on the day.

If you are on medication from your doctor please continue to take it as usual.

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

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Who will be doing the examination?

A doctor who specialises in X-ray tests (a radiologist) will do the examination.

There will also be a radiographer in the room. Sometimes there may also be a nurse, an assistant practitioner or a radiology assistant in the room.

As we are a teaching hospital a student may also be in the room. If you do not want this, you can ask that a student is not in the room when you have your examination.

What happens during the examination?

- When you get to the Radiology Department you will be shown to the waiting area.
- You may be shown to a cubicle to take off some of your clothes and put on a hospital gown.
- Before the start of the test you may be asked to go to the toilet to pee so your bladder is empty.
- When you are called into the X-ray room we will talk to you about the examination. You may ask any questions that you have.
- You will be asked to lie down on the X-ray table on your back.
- Everything will be kept clean and sterile during the procedure. Your skin around the urethra will be cleaned with sterile cleaning fluid. The radiologist will wear sterile gloves.
- A small soft tube called a catheter will be gently inserted into the opening of the urethra. Lubricating jelly will be used to make this easier.
- A small amount of a colourless liquid that shows up on X-rays (contrast liquid) will be put through the tube to fill the urethra.
- X-ray pictures of the urethra will be taken.
- The examination will end when the doctor has all the pictures they need.

How long will it take?

The time will vary for each patient. Most examinations take 30 minutes.

What happens after my examination?

You can go to the toilet to clean and shower if you want to.

After this you can go home.

You should have plenty to drink for the next 2 days. This is to help wash out the contrast liquid.

How do I get the results?

The results will not be given to you straight away.

Your X-ray pictures will be looked at by the radiologist. The results will be sent to the doctor who wanted you to have this examination.

After your examination we will tell you who the results will go to and how to get your results.

If you are an inpatient when you come for the test the results will be given to the doctors looking after you on the ward.

Are there any risks or complications?

As with any procedure or operation, complications are possible. We have included the most common risks and complications in this leaflet. The possibility of these happening is different for each person.

- **Discomfort when peeing** - you may feel discomfort when peeing and your pee may also be slightly pink after having a urethrogram. This usually gets better in less than 12 hours. If you get any bleeding or have difficulty with peeing and emptying your bladder, please contact your GP or call NHS 111.
- **Infection in your bladder or urethra (urinary tract infection)** - There is always a small risk if infection from having a catheter. Symptoms can include feeling pain when you pee, feeling like you need to pee more often or more urgently, having a high temperature. If you get these symptoms, please contact your GP or call NHS 111 as you may need antibiotics.
- **Damage to the urethra.** This is rare but is more common if the urethra is already damaged and torn.
- **Reaction to the contrast liquid** - Some patients may be allergic to the contrast liquid and may have symptoms such as feeling or being sick (nausea or vomiting), or a rash. If you get any of these symptoms at the hospital, tell the doctor, nurse or other staff looking after you. If you develop symptoms at home you should contact your GP or call NHS 111.

What are the risks from exposure to radiation in this procedure?

The main risk from exposure to X-rays is a higher risk of getting a cancer in the future. This risk is thought to be very small.

We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. This comes from the sun, the food we eat, and the ground. Each test that uses X-rays gives a dose on top of this natural background radiation.

The risks of radiation are slightly higher for an unborn child so we must ask some patients aged 10 to 55 years about their periods and possibility of being pregnant

The benefits of having this test are likely to outweigh any possible risks. The risks of not having the test could be greater. We try to keep your exposure to X-rays as low as possible.

What if I need to talk to someone?



If you have any questions or concerns, or cannot make the appointment:

Please call the X-ray department on **0116 258 8765** and select **option 7**. Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, excluding bank holidays.

Any questions?

If you have any questions you can write them down. This is to remind you to ask when you come for your appointment.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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