



Loopogram scans

This information sheet explains about loopogram scans, what is involved and what to expect when your child has one at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH).

What are loopogram scans?

Your child has a stoma, that is, the bowel has been brought to the skin surface of the abdomen, so that faeces (poo) can be passed out of the body. A loopogram is often suggested to find out why your child's stoma is not working as well as it should. It is also used to check the rest of the bowel before the operation to close the stoma so that your child poos through their anus in the usual way. A loopogram scan uses contrast liquid, which shows up well on x-rays, inserted into the stoma.

Are there any alternatives?

Various types of scan such as CT, ultrasound and x-rays can show the size and shape of your child's digestive system but not how it is working. The results of the scan are used to plan your child's treatment.

When you receive your appointment letter

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please inform the department at least two weeks beforehand. Sometimes, we can offer the appointment to another child on the waiting list. As so many children and young people need to use our services, we have had to introduce a policy where if a child cancels or does not attend two appointments in a row, we will close their referral and inform their GOSH consultant.

The day of the scan

It is helpful to bring a spare set of stoma dressings and a spare bag with you so that you can change your child's bag after the scan.

Please arrive at the Radiology department at the time stated in your child's appointment letter.

Many of the studies we perform involve the use of x-rays. Legally, we are obliged to ask any girls over the age of 12 whether there is any chance they might be pregnant. This is to protect babies in the womb from receiving unnecessary radiation. We will also ask mothers or other female carers if they could be pregnant, especially if they are planning to come into the scanning room with their child. If you are pregnant, we suggest you bring another member of the family with you, to be with your child during the scan instead.

Your child will need to wear a hospital gown for this test but can keep a vest or t-shirt on underneath. Any metal on their everyday clothing, such as zips or buttons, will show up on the scan, giving a misleading result.

The scan

You will be able to stay with your child throughout the scan. Your child will need to lie on the bed and uncover the stoma by taking off the bag and peeling away the dressing.

The doctor will gently insert the tip of a soft plastic tube into the stoma and inject a small amount of liquid contrast. Your child will usually not feel the liquid going into the stoma.



After the contrast liquid has been injected, a series of pictures will be taken while it flows through your child's large bowel. You and your child will be able to see the pictures on a screen by the bed. The scan usually takes about 30 minutes.

After the scan

When enough pictures have been taken, your child will be able to get off the bed and get dressed. You will need to put on a new stoma bag, which will catch the contrast liquid as it flows out of your child's bowel. If they are not having any further tests or scans, you will be free to go home. The radiology doctor will send a report about the scan to your child's doctor.

Are there any risks?

The contrast liquid will not interfere with any medicines your child is taking. It may however cause some constipation in the days that follow the test so your child should drink plenty of fluids. Your child's faeces (poo) may appear white as the contrast is passing out of their body but this is quite normal. While x-rays use radiation, the amount in an individual set of pictures is low compared with the background radiation we get from the environment. Each x-ray is calculated so that the best picture can be taken using the minimum amount of radiation.

When you get home

Your child should drink plenty of fluids for the next couple of days to flush the contrast liquid out of their digestive system and prevent any constipation.

**If you have any questions,
please telephone the Radiology
department on 020 7829 8615**

Compiled by the Radiology department in collaboration with the Child and Family Information Group
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust, Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3JH
www.gosh.nhs.uk