



Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust: Information for Families

X-ray

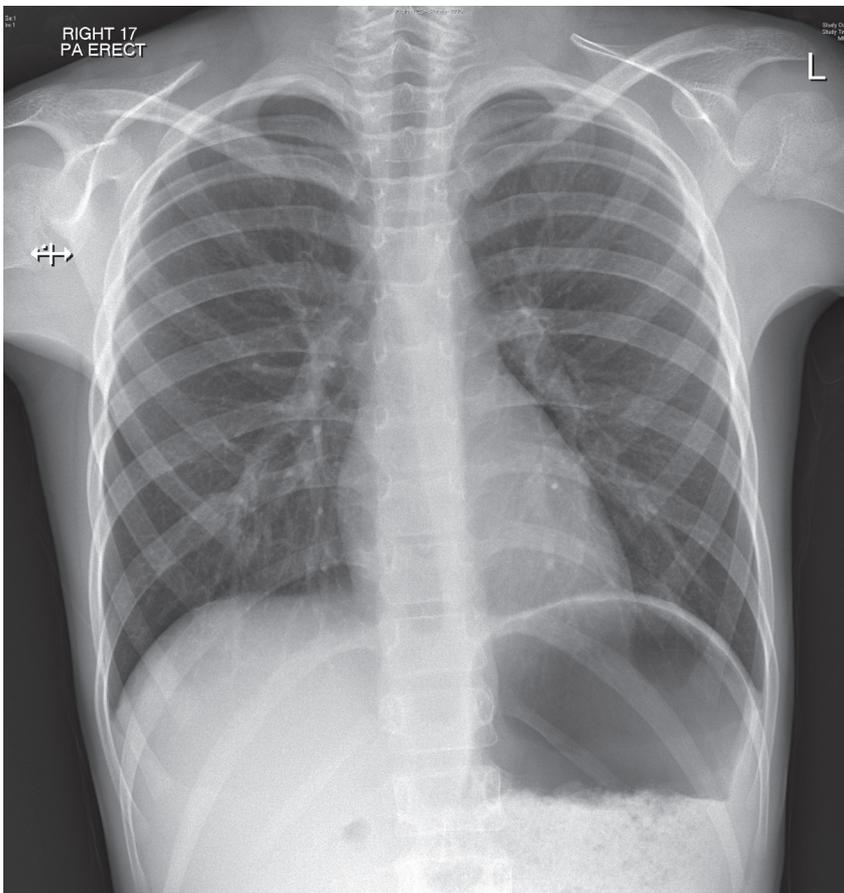
This information sheet explains about having an x-ray, what is involved and what to expect when your child comes to Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) for the scan.

What is an x-ray?

An x-ray is a type of image used to show parts of the body. Usually, the x-ray machine is positioned in front of the patient, with the camera film behind them. The x-ray machine sends out x-ray particles which can pass through the body to make an image on the camera film. The particles are unable to pass through dense parts of the body, such as bone.

They are bounced back towards the x-ray machine, so that they do not reach the camera film. These areas will look white on the image. Parts of the body containing air, such as the lungs, appear black because the particles pass straight through the lungs onto the camera film. Other areas such as muscle, fat or fluid will look grey.

The images are recorded on a computer so a specialist doctor (radiologist) can examine them and write a report.



Are there any alternatives?

There are various types of imaging techniques, such as CT or MRI or ultrasound scans, which can be used instead of or as well as x-rays. These scans use x-rays, magnets or sound waves to create the pictures. The type of imaging used depends on your child's health and the reason why the imaging is needed. Different types of scan are useful for answering different types of medical question. X-rays are best for looking at the bones and lungs.

When you receive your appointment letter

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please inform the department as soon as possible 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

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 may need to wear a hospital gown for the scan as any metal on their everyday clothing, such as zips or buttons, will show up on the x-ray, giving a misleading result.

The scan

You will be able to stay with your child throughout the scan but you will need to put on a lead apron, like the radiologists wear. The radiographer will ask your child to stand up, sit down or lie on a bed depending on the part of the body being x-rayed. Your child will need to lie very still for a few seconds while the pictures are being taken. If they move, the pictures will be blurred so some extra ones will need to be taken.

After the scan

When enough pictures have been taken, your child will be able to get dressed and go home if no further tests or treatment is planned. The radiology doctor will send a report about the scan to your child's doctor.

Are there any risks?

Taking x-rays means using a very small amount of radiation to create the picture. X-rays occur naturally in the atmosphere all around us and everyone receives a small amount as part of everyday life. Each x-ray is calculated so that the best picture can be taken using the minimum amount of radiation.

**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
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