

Patient Information

Cholangiogram

What is a Cholangiogram?

A CT scan is used to examine the gall bladder and bile ducts. Biliscopin, a special contrast medium (sometimes called “x-ray dye”), is a colourless liquid which drains into your bile through your liver. This allows our radiologist to see your gallbladder and bile ducts more clearly on the CT scan. The Biliscopin will be passed out in the urine and bile over a few hours.

Preparation

You are required to undertake a blood test 1-2 weeks prior to your appointment so our nursing team can assess your Bilirubin. If the result is >30 please contact North Shore Radiology and Nuclear Medicine as we will need to discuss the result with the radiologist before proceeding.

You need to **fast** for 8 hours before this examination. Continue to take all your normal medications with sips of water.

If any of the following apply to you please notify the hospital staff looking after you or contact North Shore Radiology.

- Significant allergies, asthma, myeloma, kidney, liver, thyroid disease.
- A previous reaction to IV contrast / Biliscopin (dye): you may require a short course of steroids prior to the CT.
- Diabetes: If you take the oral diabetes medication metformin (Diabex, Glucophage, Diaformin) - you may need to stop your tablets for 48 hours after the test, and have your kidney function re-checked. Please contact our nursing team.
- If you might be pregnant: In general, CT and screening x-ray studies should be avoided during pregnancy, where possible.

If you are breast feeding: For infants 0-8 weeks of age, it is recommended that alternative methods of feeding are used. Breastfeeding may resume after this.

How long will it take?

You should allow around 2 hours for your examination, you will be required to stay in our department during this time.

What to expect

Prior to the scan, you will need to change into a patient gown. A small needle will be placed in a vein in your arm and Biliscopin (an X-ray contrast) will be infused over 30-45minutes. This will be monitored by the nursing staff in Radiology. Please alert radiology staff immediately if you have discomfort during the injection.

There will be a delay of 1-1½hours while the Biliscopin goes through to highlight the biliary system. During the scan you can hear the mechanisms inside of the machine whirring. It is very important that you keep still. You may be asked to hold your breath briefly. Please listen to any instructions given (you can speak to the radiographer at all times).

Radiology staff members shall be available to care for you at all times, and to answer any queries that you may have.

After Your Examination

Usually there are no after-effects. You may resume your normal diet.

Possible Side-Effects and Complications

A CT cholangiogram is a very safe way of examining the gall bladder and bile ducts. The only recorded side effects to this procedure are in relation to iodine contrast allergies. Please see Iodine Contrast Information.

RANZCR Iodinated Contrast Guidelines | RANZCR <https://www.ranzcr.com/college/document-library/ranzcr-iodinated-contrast-guidelines>

Inside Radiology: Iodine containing contrast medium 2020 <https://www.insideradiology.com.au/iodine-containing-contrast-medium/>

Questions?

You will be given the opportunity to ask any questions of the technicians or nurses at the time of your procedure, however if you have any queries prior to the appointment, please feel free to contact us by phone or email – 02 9170 4500 or contact@nsrnm.com.au. If you have any questions regarding **why** you have been referred for a cholangiogram, these should be directed to your specialist or the doctor looking after you. We are happy to re-schedule your booking so you can discuss it with your doctor.