



Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Having a Fibroscan

Information for patients



This information leaflet has been given to you to explain what a fibroscan involves and why it is being recommended for you. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to a nurse or doctor caring for you.

What is a fibroscan and why do I need it?

A Fibroscan is a noninvasive test that measures the degree of inflammation by sending high frequency sound waves through your liver.

Your doctor recommended that you have this test to help us understand the condition of your liver.

It is often used if you have one or more of these conditions:

- Viral hepatitis B and/or C.
- Alcohol related liver disease.
- Metabolic Dysfunction Associated Fatty Liver Disease.
- Hepatitis C and HIV co-infection.
- Haemochromatosis (iron overload disorder).
- Other liver diseases.

What are the benefits of this scan?

Having a fibroscan will help your doctor to understand how much scarring is in your liver. This will help him/her to plan your treatment.

A Fibroscan is a quick, painless test that provides immediate results. There are no potential complications or risks.

Who may not be suitable for a fibroscan?

You cannot have a fibroscan if you are known or suspected to be pregnant or have an implantable device, such as a pacemaker or defibrillator. Patients with ascites (a build-up of fluid causing a swollen abdomen) may not receive a valid reading from the scan. Please speak to your doctor or nurse if you think any of these apply to you.

What do I need to do to prepare for the scan?

Please do not eat or drink anything for two hours before your fibroscan. You should continue taking any prescribed medication.

You will not need to remove any clothing for the scan, but you will need to lift up your clothing to expose the right side of your abdomen (tummy). Therefore, we do not recommend that women wear a dress on the day of their test. You will not need to remove any jewellery near the site of the scan, such as a belly button piercing.

What happens during the scan?

You will be asked to lie on an examination couch, remove any clothing to expose your abdomen, and place your right arm above your head. The nurse will feel your abdomen to find the right place to perform the scan. He/she will apply jelly to your skin then place a probe over the right-side of your ribcage. When the probe is triggered, sound waves will be sent out from the probe in pulses. They will pass through your skin to your liver and bounce back. This will feel like a gentle flick against the side of your skin – it should not hurt.

The scanner measures the time it takes for the sound wave to bounce back. We will repeat this at least 10 times to make sure we get an accurate result. The mean (average) reading is then calculated by the scanner, which will show your doctor your liver stiffness.

The scan should take around 10 to 15 minutes to perform.

What happens after the scan?

As soon as the fibroscan is finished you will be able to go home or return to work. You can drive as normal and eat and drink as usual. You do not need to be accompanied to your appointment.

When will I get the result?

The result of your scan will either be discussed with you straight after the scan or during your next appointment with the doctor who requested it.

Contact details

Hepatology Clinical Nurse Specialists:

Telephone: 01865 222 057

Telephone lines are open Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm.

An answering machine is available out of hours.

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

Authors: Gemma Wilde, Thames Valley Operational Network Database Manager
Vicki Wharton, Senior Hepatology Nurse
Information adapted from Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
with kind permission

April 2024

Review: April 2027

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
www.ouh.nhs.uk/information



Making a difference across our hospitals

charity@ouh.nhs.uk | 01865 743 444 | hospitalcharity.co.uk

OXFORD HOSPITALS CHARITY (REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1175809)

