



## British Society of GI and Abdominal Radiology

### T-tube Cholangiogram

#### Patient Information Leaflet

#### **Introduction**

This leaflet tells you about a T-Tube Cholangiogram. It explains how the test is done, what to expect, and the risks involved. It is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor, but can act as a starting point for such a discussion.

#### **What is a T-Tube Cholangiogram?**

A T-Tube Cholangiogram is an X-ray examination done on patients who have had an operation to remove the gallbladder. The surgeon sometimes leaves a tube in the bile duct if there is a chance there could be a gallstone remaining in one of the ducts. The tube is brought out onto the surface of the abdomen at the time of surgery and is attached to a collecting bag. Contrast (X-ray dye) is introduced through the T tube to identify or exclude gallstones within the bile ducts on X-rays.

#### **What do I have to do before my T Tube Cholangiogram?**

There is no special preparation for this test.

#### **Females**

Females are asked to contact the Radiology department if you suspect that you may be pregnant OR if the appointment is more than 10 days after the start of your last period.

This test uses radiation and there is a risk to the unborn baby if we were to do the X-rays when you are pregnant. When you arrive for your test, you will be asked when your last period started. If it is more than 10 days earlier, your appointment will be postponed.

#### **Allergy to iodine or contrast medium**

You should inform us in advance if you have a known allergy to iodine or intravenous contrast material (dye). Your doctor may prescribe medications prior to the examination to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction.

## **Where do I go when I arrive at the hospital?**

Please report to the reception desk in the Radiology department with your appointment letter 10 minutes before your appointment time. You will be asked to sit in the waiting area until called by a member of staff.

A member of the team will explain the test and answer any questions. If you have to undress for the procedure, you will be shown to a private cubicle and asked to change into a clean gown. You will be asked to remove all jewellery and metal from the area to be examined. Your clothes and valuables will be secured in a locker until after the procedure.

## **Can I bring a relative/friend?**

You may bring a relative or friend with you to the appointment but, as the examination uses x-rays, for reasons of safety they will not be able to accompany you into the examination room, except in very special circumstances. If the patient is a young child or is un-cooperative, a parent or health worker may stay in the room but will be required to wear a protective lead apron.

If you need an interpreter please tell us when you receive your appointment so that we can arrange this.

## **What happens during the Procedure?**

You will be taken into the screening/fluoroscopy room and asked to lie down on the fluoroscopy table. The fluoroscopy equipment uses x-rays to obtain real-time moving images of the body. A small beam of continuous x-rays passes through the body to an image intensifier, which is suspended over the X-ray table. The sequence of images produced can be viewed on a computer monitor.

X-ray pictures are taken of the abdominal area. The tube draining the bile duct is cleaned and a small needle is inserted into it. A small amount of contrast (X-ray dye) is injected into the bile ducts through the tube while x-ray pictures are taken. The table may be tilted or you may be asked to lie in different positions whilst the images are taken.

The procedure will be performed by a Radiologist, who is a doctor specially trained to carry out complex imaging examinations and to interpret the images. The Radiologist is helped by a Radiographer, who is a professional trained to carry out X-rays and other imaging examinations.

The examination takes about 30 minutes to complete.

### **What happens after the test?**

At the end of the test the needle is removed from the tube and you will return to the ward.

### **Are there any risks?**

Fluoroscopy involves the use of X-rays. There are strict guidelines in place for the use of x-rays in diagnosing medical conditions so fluoroscopic examinations can only be performed at the request of a Doctor. We will keep the radiation dose as low as we possibly can. Women who are or might be pregnant must inform a member of staff in advance.

You may experience slight discomfort during the procedure but it should not be painful.

The risk of serious allergic reaction to contrast materials used for a T Tube Cholangiogram is uncommon, and radiology departments are well-equipped to deal with this.

Despite these slight risks, your doctor believes it is advisable that you should have this examination, and do bear in mind there are greater risks from missing a serious disorder by not having your examination.

### **How do I get my results?**

The Radiologist will review the images from your T Tube Cholangiogram and send a report to your doctor. Your GP or hospital Consultant who referred you for the test will see you to discuss the results.

In some cases, the Radiologist may discuss the findings with you at the end of the procedure.

### **Any further questions?**

We will do our best to make your visit as comfortable and stress free as possible. If you have any further questions, or suggestions for us, please let us know. If you would prefer information and advice in another language, please contact the Radiology department.

### **Further Information**

For general information about Radiology departments, visit The Royal College of Radiologists' website: [www.goingfora.com](http://www.goingfora.com)

For information about the effects of x-rays read the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) publication: 'X-rays how safe are they?' on the website: [http://www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebFile/HPAweb\\_C/1194947388410](http://www.hpa.org.uk/webc/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1194947388410)

For health advice or information you can call NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or visit the website: [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

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