

Patient information on

# MRI & Contrast Injections



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## **Gadolinium (Gadovist®) – MRI Contrast Injection**

This page contains information on gadolinium (also known by one of its brand names Gadovist®) which is a contrast (dye) used during some MRI scans.

### **What is gadolinium?**

Gadolinium is a clear colourless fluid that is used to make the images clearer during an MRI scan and help with diagnosis. A radiologist (a specialist doctor trained in studying scans and x-rays) will decide if you need gadolinium and discuss this with you.

### **How is it given?**

The contrast is injected into one of your veins via a cannula (a soft hollow plastic tube) during your scan. The cannula is inserted into a vein using a needle. Once the cannula is in place, the needle is removed leaving a small thin plastic tube in the blood vessel. This will be in place until your scan is finished.

### **Are there any side effects?**

Gadolinium is not suitable for everyone and you will have received a phone call or letter prior to the scan so the radiologist will have decided dependent on your answers to a number of questions whether it is necessary.

**It is important you mention if you have had a history of kidney or liver problems, if you are diabetic or if you have had a previous allergic reaction to a contrast agent.**

Gadolinium may also cause side effects in some people such as a headache or nausea but these are usually mild and short lasting.

If you have any concerns about side effects, please speak to the staff caring for you. Occasionally the injection may leak out of vein into the tissues under the skin- this is known as extravasation. If this happens during your scan the staff caring for you will advise you and give treatment at the time.

Allergic reactions are uncommon but do occur. Most occur during the injection or within the first hour of administration however some can occur up to several days after. Serious allergic reactions have been rarely reported.

**Please seek immediate medical attention with your GP or A&E** if you have any of the following:

- **Swelling of face, mouth, hands, feet or throat**
- **Difficulty in breathing or swallowing**
- **Fainting**
- **Coughing or wheezing**
- **Eye irritation**
- **Rash, hives, itchy red skin.**

If you have any concerns once you have left the hospital please call **0114 263 2110**.

## **Hyoscine butylbromide (Buscopan®) - Abdominal MRI/CT scans only**

This page contains information on hyoscine butylbromide (also known by its brand name Buscopan®) which may be given to you when you have an abdominal or pelvic MRI or CT scan.

### **What is hyoscine butylbromide?**

As your bowel is constantly moving on a motion known as peristalsis, this can make the MRI or CT pictures blurry.

Buscopan® belongs to a group of medicines called ‘antispasmodics’ which means that it helps to slow down this movement and improve the quality of your pictures.

We will ask you a few questions before your scan to determine whether this medicine is suitable for you.

### **How is it given?**

Buscopan® is injected into one of your veins via a cannula (a soft hollow plastic tube) during your scan. The cannula is inserted into a vein using a needle. Once the cannula is in place, the needle is removed leaving a small thin plastic tube in the blood vessel. This will be in place until your scan is finished. One dose is usually given before or during the scan.

### **Are there any side effects?**

Like all medicines hyoscine butylbromide can cause side effects although not everyone will experience them. Some of the most common side effects include:

- **Blurred vision**
- **Dry mouth**
- **Dizziness**
- **Increased heart rate**
- **Constipation**
- **Pain at the injection site.**

If you have any concerns about side effects, please speak to the staff caring for you.

If you experience blurred vision, we advise you not to drive or operate machinery until this has worn off. Serious allergic reactions have been rarely reported.

**Please seek immediate medical attention with your GP or A&E** if you have any of the following:

- **Allergic reactions such as skin rash, hives and itching**
- **Severe allergic reactions - Difficulty in breathing or swallowing (anaphylaxis)**
- **Nausea and vomiting**
- **Painful red eye with loss of vision**

If you have any concerns once you have left the hospital please call **0114 263 2110**.