

Having a Doppler ultrasound scan of your penis for erectile dysfunction

Department of Radiology

Information for Patients

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Introduction

If you are an outpatient please read your appointment letter carefully to check which hospital your appointment is at. It may also have directions to the ultrasound department.

This leaflet tells you about your scan. Please read it carefully as it has important information and instructions.

Why do I need a penis Doppler scan?

A Doppler scan of the penis is a test to find out why there is a problem getting or keeping an erection. This common problem is called erectile dysfunction (ED). There are a number of risk factors for ED. These include getting older, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, smoking, depression and some medicines.

Problems with blood flow (vascular problems) are another cause of ED. Getting and keeping an erection relies on enough blood flow into the penis and staying in there. A helpful way of thinking about this is to imagine trying to fill a bath tub. The taps need to be turned on to let water into the bath (inflow). A plug is needed to stop the water going out (outflow).

ED can be caused by inflow ED and outflow ED.

- **Inflow ED** is where the blood flow into the penis does not increase enough to get an erection. This is like the bath taps not turning on enough.
- **Outflow ED** is where the blood flow out of the penis does not decrease enough, so erection cannot be maintained. This is like the plug in the bath not working properly.

The Doppler scan is used to see if you have problems with blood flow to and from your penis. The test will take measurements to see if the inflow and outflow of blood to your penis are within normal limits.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

What is a Doppler ultrasound scan?

An ultrasound scan is an exam that uses high-frequency sound waves to create an image of the inside of the body. The scan uses a small device called a probe. The sound waves from the probe bounce off different parts of the body. The echoes or reflections are picked up by the probe and turned into an image on the screen.

A Doppler scan uses ultrasound to check the blood flow inside the body.

Asking for your permission (consent)

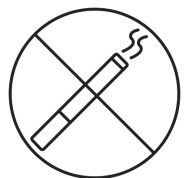
The doctor who referred you should have talked to you about the reasons for this scan and any other options with you.

A doctor who specialises in ultrasound and X-ray treatments (a radiologist) will do this scan. They will help you understand why the scan is being done and the possible risks.

If after talking to the radiologist you do not want to have the scan then you can decide not to have it.

How do I get ready for the scan?

- If you are on medicine from your doctor please take it as normal.
- If you smoke, please **do not smoke for 3 days before your Doppler scan**. Smoking affects the blood flow to the penis and could affect your scan.
- **We advise you to wear loose fitting trousers** such as track suit bottoms to your appointment.



What happens during the ultrasound scan?

- When you get to the radiology department we will direct you to the ultrasound waiting area.
- We may take you to a changing cubicles and ask you change into a hospital gown.
- We will take you into the ultrasound room and talk about the scan. Please ask any questions that you have about the scan.
- We will ask you to lie down on the ultrasound table with your pants pulled down a short way.
- We will use a very small needle to inject a vasodilator drug into the side of your penis. This drug makes the blood vessels wider and increases blood flow to the penis. This may cause you to get an erection or partial erection within a few minutes.
- We will then do the scan of the blood vessels in the penis. We put a water-based gel on your penis. We place the ultrasound probe onto this area. You may hear some whooshing sounds from the ultrasound machine during the scan. This is the sound the machine makes when scanning blood flow.

Who will be doing the scan?

- A doctor who has specialised in ultrasound and X-ray treatments (a radiologist) will do the scan.
- A radiology assistant may be in the room to help the doctor.
- A student may also be in the room. If you do not want this, you can ask that the student is not in the room when you have your scan.

We know that this scan deals with a very intimate problem. We try our best to give you privacy. We will do the scan in a way that supports your dignity. We will make every effort to make you feel relaxed and comfortable.

How long will it take?

The time for a scan will vary for each patient. It usually takes 20 to 30 minutes.

What happens after the scan?

- We will give you some paper tissue to wipe off the gel. You can then get dressed.
- We may ask you to stay in the waiting area for 15 minutes. This is so we can check you are OK.
- If you still have an erection after 15 minutes, we may ask you to stay nearby and walk around. This may be for up to 1 hour or until the erection goes down.
- We advise you to wear loose fitting trousers such as track suit bottoms to your appointment. It may take up to 2 hours for the erection to go down completely after the scan.

How do I get the results?

You will not get the results straight away.

The radiologist will look at your scan pictures again.

We will send the results to your GP or hospital doctor who wanted you to have this test.

If you are an inpatient, we will send the results to the doctors looking after you on the ward.

Your urology doctor (urologist) will look at your results. The results of this scan are part of a full assessment of your problem. They will help the urologist to decide the cause of your ED and how to plan the treatment.

Are there any risks or side effects from the scan?

There are no known risks from the sound waves used in an ultrasound scan. Ultrasound scans do not have any side effects and are generally painless.

Possible risks or side effects from the injection:

- **Pain:** You may feel some pain or discomfort when the injection is given.
- **Bruising:** You may get a small bruise at the injection site.
- **Erection:** You may still have an erection after the scan but this should go within 1 to 2 hours.
- **Erection for longer than 2 hours:** There is a small risk of a lasting (persistent) painful erection (priapism). This may happen in 1 or 2 in 100 people. If you have an erection for too long, the penis cannot get enough oxygen. It also cannot get rid of waste products.



Often the erection will go down if you do vigorous exercise like running up a few flights of stairs (if your health allows).

What if I need to talk to someone?

If you have any questions or concerns, or cannot make the appointment:



- Please call the ultrasound booking line on **0116 258 8765** and select **option 4**. Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, but not on bank holidays.

After the scan, if you still have an erection or pain after 2 hours, or if you have any other concerns:

- **Call the Urology Nurse specialists 0116 258 4635 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 3.45pm)** Your call may go to answerphone. Messages will not be collected outside of these hours.
- **Outside of these hours** (or if you have not got a response to your earlier answerphone message) call the Hospital Switchboard on **0300 303 1573** and ask to speak to the **Urology Doctor on call**.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

Previous reference:

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk