



Diagnostic Imaging Department

Having a DXA (Bone Density) Scan

About having a DXA scan

You have been referred to South Walks House for a DXA scan to determine your bone density. We hope this leaflet will answer some of the questions you may have.

What is a DXA scan?

DXA stands for **Dual Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry**. It uses a low energy x-ray beam to measure the density of your bones and whether you have osteoporosis. The scan is done on the lower back and one hip.



DXA Scanner

How long will the scan take?

Your scan will take between 10 and 20 minutes.

What does it involve?

To have a DXA scan, you must be able to lie flat for approximately 15 minutes and be under 204kg (32 stone).

You must also be able to transfer onto a fixed height table of 68cm with minimal assistance. There are no injections involved in this examination.

Do I need to prepare for the scan?

Eat, drink and take any medications as you normally would. However, do not take calcium supplements for 24 hours before your DXA scan.

You will be asked to change into a gown and remove any necklaces and navel piercings.

Please make sure you have completed **both sides** and **ALL** of the questionnaire before your appointment as all questions are relevant.

Is there anything I should tell the radiographer before the scan?

YES - If you have two hip replacements or have had surgery on your back, please tell us.

Please also let us know if you are, or think you may be, pregnant.

Who will be present for the scan?

The scan will be performed by a trained radiographer who specialises in bone density.

Occasionally student radiographers may be present to observe the scan.

What happens to the results of the scans?

We are unable to give you the results of your scan at the time of your appointment. We aim to report on examinations within 3 weeks and the results will be sent to your referring clinician.

Please contact your referring clinician for your results and not the DXA department.

Contact Numbers:

We hope that you have found this information useful. If you have any questions or are worried about anything, please speak to the following Dorset County Hospital Staff:

Department:	01305 255161
Dorset County Hospital Switchboard:	01305 251120
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):	0800 7838058

About this leaflet:

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If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email pals@dchft.nhs.uk



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Is the radiation safe and how much radiation is involved?

YES - The amount of radiation you receive is very small. It is much less than most ordinary x-ray examinations. The dose from a DXA scan is equivalent to one day's normal background radiation in the atmosphere.

Cancelling your appointment

If you are unable to attend for your appointment, we would be grateful if you could contact us as soon as possible on 01305 255161 we can then arrange a new time slot for you and offer your original appointment to another patient.