

Intravenous Urogram (IVU)

An IVU, also referred to as an IVP (Intravenous Pyelogram), is a special type of x-ray examination of the urinary tract which includes the kidneys, ureters (tubes draining the kidneys) and bladder.

Using a dye (contrast agent), the urinary tract can be identified and assessed by the Radiologist.

Reasons for having an IVU

It provides information about the structure of the urinary tract and shows how well the different parts are working. It is a useful investigation for suspected diseases of the urinary tract with symptoms such as loin pain, recurring urinary tract infections (UTI) or bleeding from the urinary tract.

The alternatives may be a CT scan (Computed Tomography scan), a Cystoscopy (bladder examination) or an Ultrasound scan depending on the reasons for the examination.

Preparation

- Contact your insurance company to obtain an authorisation code. You must bring this with you on the day along with your policy number
- You must not eat anything 4 hours before the procedure however it is important to keep well hydrated. We therefore recommend that you drink plenty of water
- Take all your regular medications

Please inform the Imaging department in advance if:

- You have Diabetes, especially if you are taking the drug Metformin
- *If you do take Metformin, you will be asked to stop taking the drug for 48 hours after the injection of dye. This is to prevent possible impairment of kidney function.*
- You are Asthmatic
- You have any allergies
- You are or might be pregnant

On the day of your examination

On arrival at the Imaging department you will be registered and will need to provide an authorisation code from your insurance company or another proof of payment. Once registered, you will be given a gown to change into.

The examination:

- You will be asked to lie on the x-ray table and preliminary x-rays of your abdomen will be taken
- The Radiographer will put a fine catheter (tube) into a vein in your hand or arm. The dye will then be injected through the tube and into the bloodstream. This is not painful.
- You will feel a strange warm sensation as the dye is injected but this should only last a few moments. You may also experience a temporary metallic taste in the mouth.
- A series of x-rays is then taken as the dye passes from your bloodstream to kidneys, then drained through the ureters into the bladder.
- You will be asked to lie very still while the x-rays are taken so that the pictures are not blurred and you will need to hold your breath for a short time
- It may be necessary to place a tight belt around your tummy and leave it there before taking further x-rays. The belt will be loosened and further x-rays taken
- Several pictures are taken over a period of about an hour
- The final x-ray will be taken after you have been to the toilet to empty your bladder

After the examination:

- You should be able to go home immediately after your examination
- You can drive if you wish and return to eating and drinking normally

The results of the examination will be sent to the doctor who referred you for the examination usually within 2 working days. Please do not ask the Radiographer for your results.

Complications

The only complications that may arise from an IVU are related to the contrast agent. Some people may have an allergic reaction to the dye. This is very rare and can be

treated immediately with appropriate medicines. Also, the dye can cause further kidney damage in people who already have kidney problems.

People who have allergies or kidney problems should tell the Radiographer prior to the examination.

Contraindications

This examination requires the use of ionising radiation. There are known but slight risks to the foetus if exposed to ionising radiation, therefore if there is any chance that you could be pregnant, you will not have this examination.

Contact us

If you have anymore questions or need further information please contact us on:

020 7483 5012 or

020 7586 5959 ext 6014/5157

Or contact the Superintendent, Tanille Spencer, on 020 7483 5066