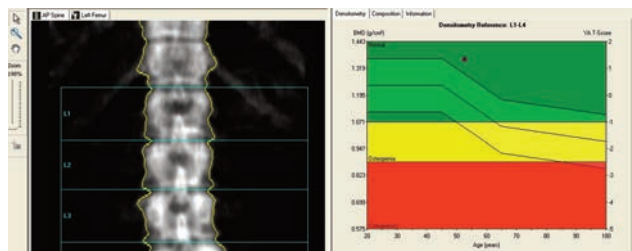


What happens during the scan?

Firstly your height and weight are recorded. Then the radiographer will also ask you a list of questions prior to the scan. You will then be asked to lie down on a comfortable padded scanning couch for approximately 15 minutes while the electronic arm of the scanner then travels very slowly over the area of your body being scanned. A bone density scan can diagnose osteoporosis, assess your risk of breaking a bone and monitor the effects of treatment.



What happens after the scan?

You will be removed from the scanner and allowed to dress and retrieve your items.

Are there any side effects?

No. There are no restrictions on normal activity – you can eat and drink normally, drive and return to work immediately after the scan.

When will I get my results?

After the examination the images will be reviewed by a Radiologist who will report on the findings of the scan. This report will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will then discuss the findings with you and decide on treatment required, if any.

We will not be able to discuss your results directly with you, only your doctor or Consultant can do this.



Alliance Medical Diagnostic Imaging

Alliance Medical is a specialist provider of Diagnostic Imaging services to the public and private sectors throughout Ireland. We believe in providing our patients with easily accessible, high quality clinical care, using appropriate technology, in a timely manner within a caring environment.

Additionally we want to assist our referring physicians with a locally delivered, high quality, professional and efficient diagnostic service which addresses their patients' diagnostic needs with regard to accessibility and quality of care.

Locations

Alliance Medical are located throughout Ireland. To make an appointment at one of our Diagnostic Imaging Centres please log onto our website www.alliancemedical.ie to find your nearest Alliance Medical facility.



www.facebook.com/AllianceMedicalIreland



Dual Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry (DXA)



www.alliancemedical.ie

What is a DXA scan?

A DXA scan is the gold standard diagnostic test for osteoporosis. It is a specialised scanner called Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry and is used to measure the density of bones. This test is currently the most accurate and reliable means of assessing the strength of your bones and your risk of breaking a bone. It is a simple, painless procedure that uses very low dose radiation. A scan of the patient's spine and hips are the recommended areas to be scanned.

What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis is a condition whereby the bones become more porous and eventually weaken. Patients suffering with osteoporosis are at an increased risk of fractures. Osteoporosis can affect the entire skeleton but most commonly affects the hip, spine and wrist. Osteoporosis is a condition more commonly associated with women after menopause, but it can also affect men.



What are the risk factors for Osteoporosis?

The following risk factors are thought to contribute to osteoporosis:

- Age. The older you are, the greater the risk of osteoporosis.
- Race. You are at greatest risk of osteoporosis if you are white or of Asian descent.
- Family History. Having a parent or sibling with osteoporosis puts you at greater risk.
- Frame Size. Men and women with smaller body frames tend to be higher risk because they have less bone mass.
- Hormone levels. The reduction in oestrogen levels at menopause or a reduction in testosterone levels in men can weaken bones.
- Dietary factors. The risk of osteoporosis increases if there is a low calcium intake, or if you have suffered from an eating disorder or had weight loss surgery (e.g. a gastric bypass) as these can limit the amount of calcium and other nutrients ingested or absorbed.
- Medication. Long term use of corticosteroid medications and some medicines used to combat or prevent seizures, reflux, cancer and depression can disrupt bone-rebuilding processes. Taking steroid tablets for three months or more.
- Lifestyle Choices. A sedentary lifestyle puts people at a higher risk of osteoporosis than those who are more active. Excessive alcohol consumption and smoking also increases your risk of osteoporosis.
- A fracture following a minor fall or injury.
- Loss of height due to fracture of a vertebra (back bone).
- An early menopause (aged less than 45).

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How should I prepare for my DXA examination?

You will require a referral letter from your doctor for a DXA scan.

Do not take calcium supplements on the day of your examination. You should inform the radiographer if there is any possibility that you may be pregnant. Please let us know if you have any disabilities or special requirements when making your appointment so that we can ensure we are able to offer you the highest quality service.

Can I bring a relative or friend?

Yes someone may accompany you on the day of your scan. However this person will not be permitted to stay with you during the scan.

What happens when I arrive?

On the day of your scan you should arrive 15 minutes before your appointment time. You will check in at reception and you might be asked by the reception staff to complete some forms.

You must remove all jewellery, coins, wallet, watch, hair grips, mobile phone, and any other loose items from your person. You may be asked to change into a hospital gown. The examination will be explained to you and you will be given the opportunity to ask any questions.

