



“Good Help To Those In Need Since 1824”

X Ray Department

Bon Secours Hospital

Tralee, Co Kerry.

***Patient Information Leaflet
For a***

DEXA (Bone Density) Scan

DEXA Scan

This leaflet will give you the following information:

- What is a DEXA Scan?
- How should I prepare?
- What will I experience during and after the procedure?
- Who interprets the results and how do I get them?



A DEXA Scan (Dual Energy X Ray Absorptiometry) scan is a special non invasive form of imaging that measures bone density and loss. In general the denser the bone, the stronger it is and therefore less likely it is to break.

A DEXA scan uses low energy x rays. The amount of x rays that comes through the bone from the x ray source is measured by a detector. The computer then assesses this information and applies a score for the average density of bone in the area scanned. A low score indicates that the bone is less dense than it should be and is more prone to fracture.

It is important to note that a DEXA scan does not produce images comparable to conventional x rays (for example a hip or spine x ray). It will not show the presence of arthritis or a fracture. DEXA scans are more often used to diagnose osteoporosis.

Some of the reasons why your doctor may suggest that you should have a DEXA scan are:

- Post Menopause
- Personal or family history of fractures (in particular hip)
- On medications that are known to contribute to bone loss
- Have a personal or family history of osteoporosis, diabetes, liver or renal disease
- Loss of height due to vertebral fractures.

How Should I Prepare

- There are no special preparations required before attending the department for a DEXA scan however you must wear loose comfortable clothing without metal objects (buttons and zips) over your lower abdomen and hips that will interfere with the scan.
- Please bring a list of your medications with you if possible.

What will I experience during and after the procedure?

- When you arrive to the x ray department you will be escorted to the examination room.
- It is standard practice in the Bon Secours Tralee that we will scan both your back and hips.
- The X Ray detector or scanner will move slowly over you - it is important that you remain still as movement seriously reduces the quality of the scan.
- The scan takes approximately 15 minutes.
- On completion you can get dressed and leave the department.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

- A Consultant Radiologist will interpret the data and forward a written report to the doctor who referred you for the DEXA scan (Hospital Consultant or GP). Please contact your doctor's office to clarify any instructions that they may have given you.
- These results will be posted to your Consultant or GP, this will take approximately 5-7 working days.

If you have any further questions please contact your doctor or the x ray department (066 7149869).

Please cancel your appointment by phone if you are unable to come - preferably at least one day before the examination date.

Questions

We understand that there may be questions or queries that you would like to be answered and sometimes you may forget what you want to ask.

The space below has been included for you to write down any questions or queries that you may have.