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This leaflet is available in large print. Arrangements can also be made on request for it to be explained in your preferred language. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: rjah.pals.office@nhs.net

Feedback

Tell us what you think of our patient information leaflet. Please send your comments to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) email: rjah.pals.office@nhs.net

Payment

Please be advised. This is not an NHS funded service. Cheques are acceptable, made payable to RJAH NHS Trust. Private health MAY cover this service, but please check first.

Additional cost is involved to report scan by specialist consultant which is billed separately.

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Author: Dr Chadi Rakieh

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Information for patients Private Consultant Led Bone Health Service



Rheumatology

The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt
Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust,
Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 7AG
Tel: 01691 404592
www.rjah.nhs.uk

Bone Densitometry

What is Osteoporosis

Thin bone, which is at risk of fracturing (breaking)

Why are we worried?

The main places in the body that fracture are:

Hip	Causes loss of independence. Common cause of nursing home entry. 20% mortality within one year.
Wrist	Many do not get proper use back e.g. gardening and cooking.
Spine	Back pain, height loss and deformity.

How do we measure osteoporosis?

The process of DXA scanning is the method of choice for identification of bone density, which indicates whether treatment will be effective.

Why at RJAH?

- More than 20 years experience in the field
- Staffed by a qualified radiographer
- Team dedicated to DXA unit
- State of the art technology
- Led by a metabolic bone Consultant

Why measure at the spine and hip?

Spine and hips are measured as this gives us information about the two main types of bone; Trabecular and Cortical bone. Trabecular bone is found in the spine and is formed and lost faster than Cortical bone. Treatment may increase bone density at this site. Cortical bone, which constitutes more than 50% of the hip, changes more slowly. If it is already low, treatment is needed to stop it getting even lower and increasing fracture risk.

What is the scan like and how long can it take?

The process itself is simple. You will lie on a comfortable scanning table and an arm will pass slowly over your lower body (not touching). There is no tunnel or injection. It takes around five minutes for both hip and spine to be measured. You can have pillows under your head for comfort, as required.

Metal will interfere with scan results, so please do not wear metal over your stomach or hips. You may need to undress depending on the part of the body being scanned, but generally this is not necessary unless metal clips are in the way. Please avoid wearing long line bras, corsets, suspenders. Certain x-ray investigations may interfere with the scans e.g. recent barium investigation.

Please check with staff prior to your appointment.

What is the radiation dose?

The amount of radiation you will receive as a result of having your scan is around six microsieverts, approximately equivalent to one day of natural background radiation.



The DXA scanner in operation at the Charles Salt Centre in Oswestry.

Do I need a referral from my doctor?

Yes. A referral is always needed into the Service from your General Practitioner or Physician.

Who can have a scan? (risk factors)

- Early menopause (at age less than 45)
- Family history of fracture especially parental hip fracture
- Low body weight (BMI <20). For a woman of average height equates to 54kg or 8½ stone
- Female over 50
- Smoking
- More than 2 units of alcohol per day
- Loss of height (? still reach the cupboards)
- Previous spine, hip or wrist fracture
- Corticosteroid use e.g. prednisolone
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Malabsorption e.g. coeliac disease (NB fracture = broken bone)

What do I get as a result of my appointment?

A detailed Consultant report will be generated, a copy of which will be sent to your referring GP or Physician. It is intended that the report should provide a basis for your doctor to discuss your bone health. The scans will be archived at the hospital and be available should you come back for further scans, either privately or on the NHS.