Your doctor would like you to have a Nuclear Medicine Sehcat/Bile Acid Malabsorption study and has arranged for you to visit our department. We would like your visit to be as pleasant as possible and hope this leaflet will answer some of the questions you may have. Should you have any questions regarding your appointment please contact us on the appropriate telephone number below between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday:

Eastbourne Hospital Appointments – Tel: 0300 131 4797
Conquest Hospital Appointments – Tel: 0300 131 5147

What is a Sehcat/bile acid malabsorption study?
This is a study to measure the degree of bile acid retention within your body. The results of the study will help your doctor better understand how your digestive system works. This is helpful for making decisions about the best treatment for you or to check that your current medication is appropriate. Sehcat is an artificial bile acid labelled with a small amount of radioactivity. After you swallow a capsule containing a small amount of this we can measure the amount in your body at 3hrs and 7days.

Is the scan safe?
The amount of radiation you receive is as small as possible and is similar to other X-ray procedures. The radioactivity leaves the body very quickly and it will not make you feel sick or sleepy.

Do I need to prepare for the scan?
You must fast from 1 hour before your first appointment until after your first scan. From then on you can eat and drink normally and keep taking your tablets.

Is there anything I should tell the staff before the scan?
Please let us know if you have had a colonoscopy within 2 weeks of this appointment. We are unable to do this test within 2 weeks of a colonoscopy. If you receive an appointment for any other hospital procedures/imaging between your 2 scans please call the Nuclear Medicine department to check if it is OK as some tests may affect your Sehcat test. Please let us know if you are taking any medications containing bile acid sequestrants such as colestyramine, colestipol or colesevelam.

Do not take any bowel preparations/laxatives between your tablet and your second scan. Female patients please tell us if you are pregnant or if you think you may be pregnant. Also, please inform us if you are breast-feeding. Women between the ages of 12 and 60 will be asked to sign a form on the day of their test to confirm they are not pregnant. If there is any doubt, we are legally obliged to perform a pregnancy test before proceeding.
What is involved?
Shortly after you arrive we will check that you have fasted and ask you to swallow the Sehcat capsule with a small amount of water. You are then free to leave the department, but do not eat or drink. 3hrs later return to the department. We will ask you to lie down on the scanner bed when we will measure the amount of radioactivity in your body for 5mins. The camera will be above your abdomen only and will not be over your face. This measurement is repeated 1 week later enabling us to calculate the bile acid retention in your body. You do not need to fast for the second appointment.

What can I do after the scan?
You can drive a car; eat and drink normally and continue taking your tablets. If you are planning to travel abroad within 3 months after your appointment please inform a member of staff.

What happens to the results?
We cannot give you the results of your test. We will send a report to the doctor who asked for the scan as soon as possible. They will arrange your follow-up appointment.

Consent
Although you consent for this treatment, you may at any time after that withdraw such consent. Please discuss this with your medical team.

Sources of information
British Nuclear Medicine Society (BNMS)

Important information
The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments
We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4731 or email: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene
The Trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats
If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: 0300 131 4500 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net
After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

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Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:
Dr Emma Owens, Consultant Radiologist, ESHT
Dr David Sallomi, Consultant Radiologist, ESHT

The directorate group that have agreed this patient information leaflet:
Diagnostics, Anaesthetics and Surgery Division

Next review date: September 2022
Responsible clinician/author: Mr Christopher Salt, Nuclear Medicine Modality Manager
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