

**Patient  
Information**

# Having a fibroscan

## Introduction

This information has been given to you to explain what a fibroscan involves. Your doctor has recommended that you have this test to help understand the condition of your liver.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the nurse or doctor caring for you.

## What is a fibroscan?

A fibroscan is a type of ultrasound that can measure the level of inflammation in your liver. The scan is a simple painless test that uses high frequency sound waves.

## What are the benefits of a fibroscan?

Having a fibroscan will help your doctor to understand how much scarring is in your liver.

The fibroscan will give immediate results which will help the doctor to plan your treatment. There are no complications or risks associated with this scan.

The procedure is non-invasive, which means that it does not break the skin or enter your body.

## Are there any alternatives to a fibroscan?

Your doctor or nurse will discuss, with you, any alternative tests available.

One option is to have a liver biopsy. This is where a small sample of your liver tissue is removed with a needle. A liver biopsy has several disadvantages, for example, you will need to stay in hospital for several hours after the procedure and you could wait several weeks for the results. Biopsies also carry several risks, such as internal bleeding and infection. You may also have some discomfort after a biopsy. If you would like more information about having a liver biopsy, please speak to the nurse or doctor caring for you.

Reference No.

**GHP11488\_03\_25**

Department

**Hepatology**

Review due

**March 2028**

**Patient  
Information**

## **What do I need to do to prepare for the scan?**

**Please do not eat or drink anything for 3 hours before your fibroscan.**

If you need to, you can take small sips of water or clear fluid, but avoid drinking large amounts. You should take any prescribed medication as usual.

You will not need to remove any clothing for the scan, but we will need to expose the right side of your abdomen (tummy). Therefore, we do not recommend that women wear a dress on the day of their test.

## **What happens before the fibroscan?**

You should report to the receptionist on arrival at the General Outpatients Department. You will then be asked to take a seat in the waiting area.

A nurse will call you into one of the consulting rooms, where you will have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the fibroscan. Once you have discussed the scan, providing you are happy to go ahead, you will have the test.

## **What happens during the scan?**

You will be asked to lie on an examination couch and place your right arm above your head.

The nurse will feel your abdomen to find the right place to perform the scan. A probe will be placed on your abdomen.

During the scan, sound waves will be sent from the probe in pulses. They will pass through your skin to your liver and bounce back. This will feel like a gentle flick against the side of your skin but it should not hurt.

The scanner measures the time it takes for the sound wave to bounce back. We will repeat this at least 10 times to make sure we get an accurate result. The median (middle) reading is then calculated by the scanner. This will show your doctor the degree of scarring that may be present on your liver. The scan should take between 10 and 20 minutes.

## Patient Information

### What happens after the scan?

As soon as the fibroscan is finished, you will be able to go home and carry on with your normal activities.

### When will I get the result?

The result will be sent to the doctor who referred you for the fibroscan and will be discussed with you in detail at your next outpatient appointment.

### Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns, contact:

Tel: 0300 422 6056

Please leave your name, date of birth, contact number and a brief message. A member of the team will return your call.

Content reviewed: March 2025

## Making a choice

### Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



### Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

\* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85