

## Fibroscan

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net).

**This information sheet has been given to you to explain what a fibroscan involves and why it is being recommended for you. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to a nurse or doctor caring for you.**

### What is a Fibroscan?

A Fibroscan is a type of ultrasound that can measure the degree of inflammation in your liver. It is a simple, painless test that uses high frequency sound waves.

### Why is it needed?

Your doctor recommended that you have this test to help us understand the condition of your liver.

Having a Fibroscan will help your doctor to understand how much scarring is in your liver. This will help them to plan your treatment.

A Fibroscan is a quick, painless test that gives immediate results. It does not have any potential complications or risks and is non-invasive, which means that it does not break the skin or enter your body.

### What does it involve?

You will be asked to lie on an examination couch and place your right arm above your head. The Fibroscan technician will feel your abdomen to find the right place to perform the scan. They will place a probe on your abdomen and trigger the probe to start. The sound waves will be sent out 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 – 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 mean (average) reading is then calculated by the scanner, which will show your doctor your liver stiffness.

### How long will it take?

The scan should take between 10 and 20 minutes to perform.

## **What preparations are needed?**

**Please do not eat or drink anything for three hours before your Fibroscan.**

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

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. You will not need to remove any jewellery near the site of the scan, such as a belly button piercing.

## **Are there any risks or special precautions associated with Fibroscan?**

Fibroscan is very safe. The manufacturer has changed previous guidance and Fibroscan can now safely be used in most people, including pregnant women and people with implantable devices such as pacemakers or defibrillators.

It is not recommended to have a Fibroscan if you have ascites (fluid within the abdomen) present.

## **How will I feel during the test?**

The Fibroscan examination is painless, quick and easy. During measurement, you feel a slight vibration on the skin at the tip of the probe, similar to a gentle flick to the side of your skin.

## **How will I feel afterwards?**

Due to the non-invasive nature of the procedure, it is not anticipated it will affect you in any way and you should feel the same after the procedure as you did before it.

## **What happens after the test?**

Once the test is complete you will be able to travel home immediately or return to work. You can travel alone if required and no special precautions are required to facilitate your journey home.

## **Are there any risks?**

There are no risks to this procedure.

## **Follow up**

You will receive the results of the Fibroscan at this appointment, but this will be interpreted and explained by your referring practitioner or hepatology consultant, NOT the Fibroscan technician.

The Fibroscan is only one part of an assessment process that will help investigate the degree of liver disease, if any. Other factors such as ultrasound reports, blood results and relevant clinical information will also need to be taken into account.

## Further information

Should you require further information about Fibroscan do not hesitate to contact your GP, your consultant or the clinician carrying out the procedure on the day.

## References

Leaflet compiled from information from Fibroscan®, Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust.

### **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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