

WHEN WILL THE RESULTS BE AVAILABLE?

Results of your CTVC are not available on the day of your examination. The scan data will be interpreted by a radiologist (a specialist doctor trained in imaging techniques) and a written report will be sent to the doctor who referred you, usually within two days.

All questions regarding your results should be directed to your doctor.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you require further information before your scan, please contact the appointment co-ordinator.

WHERE TO GO

CT is located at Pacific Radiology's Wakefield Hospital and Boulcott Hospital branches:

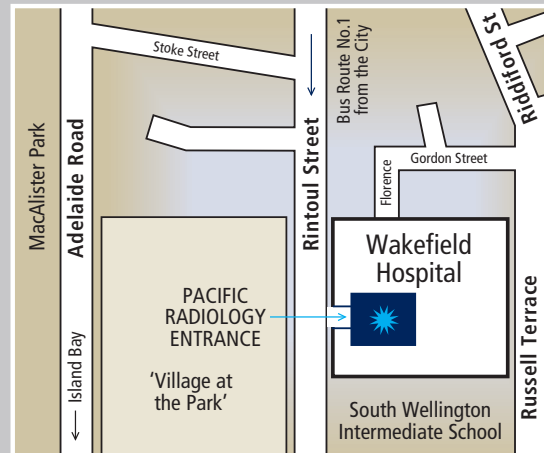
Wakefield Hospital
99 Rintoul Street
Newtown
Wellington

Boulcott Hospital
668 High Street
Lower Hutt

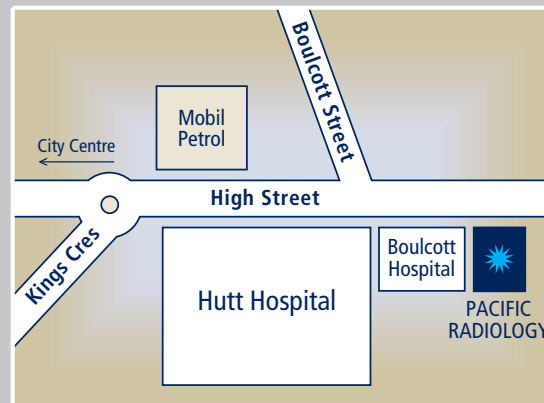
Telephone: (04) 978 5500 (appointment co-ordinator)
Facsimile: (04) 978 5501
Email: appointments@pacificradiology.co.nz

HOW TO GET THERE

Wakefield Hospital branch



Boulcott Hospital branch



Pacific Radiology

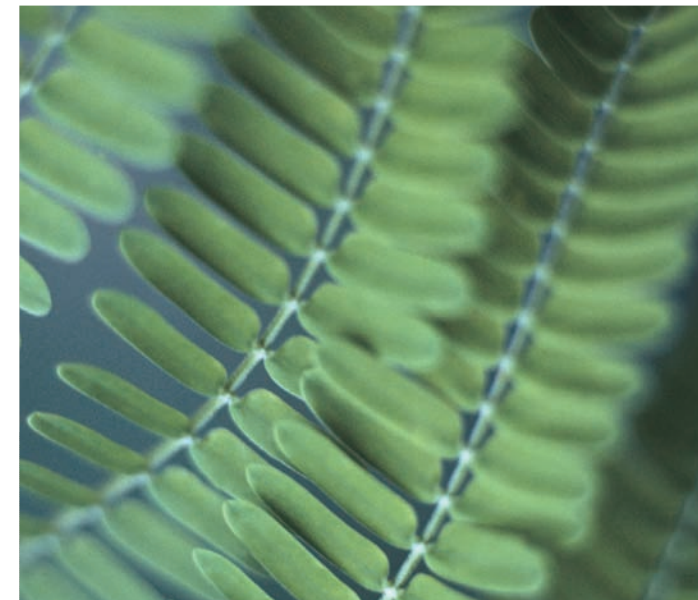
www.pacificradiology.co.nz



Pacific Radiology

VIRTUAL
COLONOSCOPY

Patient Information



radiology
service

PARTNERSHIPS IN MEDICINE

VIRTUAL COLONOSCOPY

CT Virtual Colonography (CTVC) is a recent advancement in imaging the bowel and has been shown in multiple studies to be a reliable low risk imaging test in diagnosis and staging of colorectal cancer, and the detection of polyps.

Computed Tomography (CT) is a method of x-ray imaging and technology advances in this area, including 3D reporting packages, have further improved diagnostic accuracy and confidence in this method of bowel imaging.

PREPARING FOR A CT VIRTUAL COLONOSCOPY

It is necessary for the colon to be completely empty of food residue. This is achieved by following a restricted diet and taking bowel cleansing medicines (laxatives). The laxatives will cause loose bowel motions. **The preparation is harder than the scan itself.**

In some cases the preparation will need to be altered to suit individual medical conditions or patient circumstances. Please let our booking staff know when you make an appointment if you are often constipated or regularly take any form of laxative. It is essential that you follow the preparation instructions you are given by our bookings staff exactly. The accuracy of the examination and result are dependent on this.

THE EXAMINATION

When you arrive for your appointment you will be greeted by our CT radiographer who will explain the procedure to you. You will need to remove your clothing and change into an examination gown. The examination is performed with minimal discomfort in around 15 minutes.

Previously barium or other liquid bowel contrast was needed; but with CTVC only carbon dioxide (CO₂) is used. This is delivered via a tube placed in the rectum and quickly absorbed from the bowel at the end of the procedure. You will need to lie on the CT couch and the tube will be placed inside your rectum, a balloon on the end of the tube will help keep the CO₂ inside. This often gives patients a sensation of needing to empty their bowel to start with, however the preparation will ensure your bowel is empty. Any liquid that is remaining in your bowel will be able to drain through the tube.

The CO₂ flows slowly into the bowel through the tube. You will need to try to keep your bottom muscles tight to help keep it in. You may feel some strange sensations as it moves around the twists and turns and could experience cramping discomfort. To help ease this the radiographer will ask you to move to lie in different positions, on your side, back or front at various times. We use specialised equipment to control the pressure and amount of CO₂ used.

Imaging will start once your bowel is adequately filled. Initially you will lie on your back, with your arms resting on a pillow beside your head. The CT couch will slowly move through the scanner, nothing will touch you and you will not feel anything when we take the scans. You will be given instructions to lie still and briefly hold your breath; this prevents movement during the scan. The scans are then repeated with you lying on your stomach and occasionally also on your side.

As soon as the scan is completed, the radiographer will remove the tube, and the CO₂ will quickly be absorbed. You will be able to go to the toilet at this point if you feel the need to and once you have dressed will be free to go. You are however welcome to stay a few minutes and enjoy a hot drink.

AFTER YOUR CT VIRTUAL COLONOSCOPY

Any discomfort should ease very soon after the examination. There should be no after effects and you can expect to resume your normal activities the same day. You can return to your normal diet and eat straight after the examination. It is recommended you eat something as soon as possible, especially if the preparation has left you feeling weak or tired.

