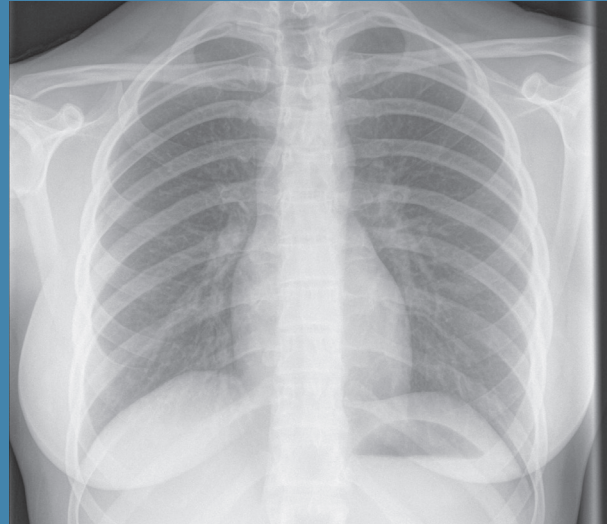


General X-ray

How long will the procedure take?

X-ray examinations are fast. Most procedures take approximately 15 minutes (depending on the part of the body being X-rayed).

Image of a General X-ray



Chest x-ray showing the lungs, heart, ribs and clavicles.



If you have any related previous images from another provider please bring them on the day.

Disclaimer:

The information contained in this brochure is intended as a guide only. If patients require more specific information please contact your referring Doctor.

For more information contact:

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Radiology



Swan Hill
District Health

my hospital

What is a General X-ray ?

X-rays are a form of radiation similar to visible light, radio-waves and microwaves. X-ray radiation is special because it has a very high energy level that allows the x-ray beam to penetrate through the body and create an image.

The image is created due to the x-ray beam being absorbed differently by different structures or parts in the body. A dense structure like bone absorbs a high percentage of the x-ray beam (which appears light grey on the image), whilst low density structures like soft tissues absorb a small percentage (which appears dark grey on the image). The body has many different structures of varying densities which absorb different amounts of x-rays, creating an x-ray image.

Preparation

Women must inform the radiographer if there is any chance that they could be pregnant. It is a good idea to wear comfortable clothing that will be easy to change out of. It is recommended that if you have children, please arrange for child care. Please try to avoid bringing your children with you to your x-ray examination if there is no one to care for them in the waiting room.

Procedure

You may or may not be asked to remove clothing and change into a gown for your x-ray, depending on the body area being imaged. All jewellery and any other metal objects will need to be removed from the area being x-rayed.

Depending on what body area you are having x-rayed, you may be asked to lie on an examination bed, or to stand up against an x-ray board (if you are physically able to), or you may be sitting on a chair. The radiographer should be able to work with whatever physical limitations you may have to produce an optimal image.

The radiographer will need to position you and you will need you to keep still in that position while they take the x-ray. The radiographer may need to take a series of images, and will ask you to wait in the room while they ensure they have completed all of the needed images.

Risks of Procedure

Generally the benefits of an x-ray examination will far outweigh the risks. The amount of radiation you receive during the examination will be within accepted medical limits.

Medical research has not yet been able to prove conclusively that there are significant effects for patients exposed to ionising radiation (the kind of radiation in x-rays) at the dose levels used in diagnostic imaging. Also, the dose of radiation that you receive from plain x-rays is much lower than for other radiology procedures such as Computed Tomography (CT) scanning or angiography (x-ray examination of the blood vessels).

Humans are constantly being exposed to background radiation in everyday life, from things like microwaves, mobile phones, airplane flights, and the earth around us. To put radiation amounts into perspective, a patient would need to have about 38 chest x-rays to receive a similar amount of normal background radiation that everyone receives in one year (ARPANSA 2008). This is very encouraging and supports the use of small doses in diagnostic radiography.

Women must inform the radiographer or office staff if there is any chance that they are pregnant.