

You are here / Home / Services, specialties / Diagnostic services / Additional diagnostic tests

Additional Diagnostic Tests - Barium Meals & Bone Density Scans



In addition to the more common diagnostic tests, Cromwell Hospital also offers barium meals and bone density scans for patients who have been referred by their GP.

What is a Barium meal?

Commonly known as a 'barium meal', this test is used to examine the stomach and oesophagus. Because these structures are not visible on a standard X-ray, a barium meal is used to coat the gut wall.

This makes it possible for the doctor to see moving pictures of the stomach and intestines.

For further details read our [Bone density scan patient information](#) guide.

What is a Bone Density Scan?

A bone density scan, also known as a DEXA scan, is used to measure the density of fragile bones (osteoporosis). You may benefit from having a bone density scan if you have had a fall or bump, or are in a high-risk group for osteoporosis.

The results of the scan help to predict how likely different bones are to fracture, and to monitor how well your osteoporosis treatment is working.

A detector measures how much radiation passes through the bones and works out how dense the bone is, compared to what is normal for someone of your age and sex. A low score indicates the bone is fragile and therefore more likely to fracture.

The test is carried out by using an x-ray machine to slowly pass over the body and take images of the bones being tested. This usually takes 20-30 minutes and is painless.

After the test, the results are sent to the GP or consultant who requested the test.

For further details read our [Bone density scan patient information](#) guide.

How do I pay for treatment?

We welcome both insured and self-pay patients as well as company and embassy sponsored patients.

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