

# CT Scans for Newborn Babies

## Information for parents

If your baby is going to have a CT scan you need to ask the doctor to explain the reason for the scan.

### **What is a CT scan?**

A CT scan, also called **Computed Tomography**, is a type of X-ray. Usually X-rays only show up hard parts of the body like bones. A CT scan can show a more detailed picture of the insides of the body and soft tissues such as the brain.

### **What are CT scans for?**

We do a CT scan when a baby has a problem that needs to be investigated, or may need a check up, and we believe that a scan might tell us something we can't find out from other tests or examinations.

### **What can Parents Do?**

You will be asked to sign a consent form after the procedure has been explained to you.

You may go with your baby to the scanning department.

It is often OK to be with your baby in the scanning room. Ask the staff if you would like to do this.

There can be quite a long wait, so we suggest you take a book or something to do

## **How is a CT scan done?**

CT scans are carried out at Auckland City Hospital, but occasionally at Greenlane Clinical Centre. The baby is put on a bed that slides in and out of the scanning machine. The CT scan usually takes about half an hour.

## **What will it show?**

The final result for a CT scan is not usually available for a few days because the doctors who examine the scan have to look at it in detail. Sometimes they can tell us something right away.

A CT scan will tell us if organs are the right size and in the right place, but the scan may not be able to show if they are working properly.

## **How do I get the Results?**

The doctors looking after your baby will tell you why the scan is being done, what it shows, and what it means. If you want to see the scan, ask the doctor who explains the results to you.

## **Is it harmful?**

A CT scan is a type of X-ray and gives a low dose of radiation.

Usually CT scans are done without special drugs or preparation.

Occasionally a special dye may have to be injected into a vein.

Very rarely this dye may cause an allergic reaction.