

Tema 3 – Patient Preparation for Imaging Tests

Soporte Teórico

In medical imaging, patient preparation is a key factor to obtain high-quality results and to ensure patient safety. Clear and precise communication of preparation steps is essential to avoid errors and complications. In English, it is important to know specific vocabulary and expressions that appear in written instructions, consent forms, or patient information leaflets.

1. Key Vocabulary

- Fasting – not eating or drinking for a specified period before the exam (usually 4–6 hours).
- Contrast agent / dye – substance injected or ingested to improve image quality.
- Allergic reaction – response of the body to a substance (e.g., iodine-based contrast).
- Metal objects / jewelry – items that must be removed before imaging (MRI, CT, X-ray).
- Pregnancy test – test to check pregnancy before certain imaging procedures.
- Intravenous line (IV line) – tube inserted into a vein for injection of contrast or medication.
- Stay still – to remain motionless during the procedure to avoid blurred images.
- Hold your breath – instruction often given during CT or MRI to reduce motion artifacts.
- Consent form – legal document signed before procedures, confirming patient's agreement.
- Previous medical history – record of diseases, allergies, and treatments relevant to the exam.

2. Useful Expressions

- Giving instructions
 - Please, do not eat or drink anything for 6 hours before the exam.
 - Remove any metal objects before entering the scan room.
 - You must arrive 15 minutes before your appointment.
- Asking about patient condition
 - Are you allergic to iodine or contrast agents?
 - Do you suffer from kidney problems or diabetes?
 - Have you had any previous reactions to contrast media?
- Explaining the procedure
 - You may feel a warm sensation after the injection of contrast.
 - The test will last about 20 minutes.
 - The scan is painless, but you must remain still.

- Checking understanding
 - Do you understand the instructions?
 - Can you repeat what you need to do before the exam?
 - Do you have any questions about the procedure?

3. Reading and Understanding Strategies

- Look for imperative verbs (do not, remove, inform, must).
- Identify conditionals (if you are pregnant, inform the staff).
- Pay attention to time markers (before, during, after the exam).
- Highlight safety warnings (never, avoid, important).
- Use context clues from the document layout (headings, bold text, bullet points).

Mastering this vocabulary and these expressions will help you understand written materials in English related to patient preparation, such as consent forms, information leaflets, and technical checklists. It will also support your ability to explain and verify preparation steps in professional practice.