

## ECHELON HEALTH

By Sonia James

ECHELON HEALTH ISN'T JUST the first class of health assessments; this is the private jet of personal MOTs. Over the course of one day, it claims that it can screen clients for up to 92 per cent of treatable disease that could lead to premature death in men and up to 95 per cent in women. It's a big claim but, reassuringly, the methodology has been interrogated and endorsed by David Wilson, the former president of the British Institute of Radiology.

The Echelon Platinum package involves an extraordinary number of tests. They include blood tests, an ECG, CT scans of your aorta, heart, chest, abdomen, pelvis and bone density, plus a virtual CT colonoscopy; an MRI of your brain; MRI carotid and cerebral angiograms; an EOS scan (an advanced type of CT) of the skeleton; a digital mammogram; ultrasounds of your uterus, ovaries and thyroid; and mole screening. And all that's on top of an in-depth cognitive assessment. If you have specific concerns, you can request extra tests à la carte.

One of the attractions of Echelon is its state-of-the-art equipment; the advanced MRI scanners are two of only a handful in the UK and twice as powerful as those used by the NHS. Many clients are wary of exposing themselves to unnecessary radiation, but Echelon uses the latest and most powerful CT scanners in the world which, as well as enhancing accuracy, means a very low radiation dose can be used. Dr Wilson says: "I'm satisfied that the risks of radiation are considerably outweighed by the potential benefit to those in the screening programme." The images are analysed by some of the most senior and experienced radiographers and radiologists in the country. No wonder there's an eight-week waiting list.

Other than reassurance that you're getting an incredibly cutting-edge and detailed preventive health assessment, one of the great delights of Echelon is that you don't have to lift a finger. They don't just send a car for you, they put you up in the Mandarin Oriental hotel in Hyde Park the night before (which is handy for completing the pesky colonoscopy prep in private) and you're assigned a personal health concierge, a private health butler if you will, for the entire process. You don't have to speak to endless different admin staff and nurses; one person knows everything about you, what you need, what you need to do and know. In my case, the glamorous, knowledgeable and friendly Hannah took me from initial calls through to form-filling, handled endless queries from me and personally delivered me and checked me in to every appointment. She even gave me a hot-water bottle to keep me toasty in the CT machine.

A week later I was in front of the Echelon founder, the eminent endocrinologist Dr Paul



## An early diagnosis generally means a better outcome

Jenkins, eagerly receiving my results. The video "fly-through" of my colon was particularly enthralling.

The dapper and friendly Jenkins has an impressive CV, having been honorary consultant endocrinologist at St Bartholomew's Hospital, led the endocrine service at Homerton University Hospital in east London, and published more than 80 peer-reviewed scientific papers. In 2007 he established the UK's leading independent diagnostic imaging company, and several years ago, to incorporate imaging into preventive health assessments, he created Echelon Health.

In the debrief he talks clients through every detail of his findings very clearly, without being patronising. If anything untoward should be discovered, Jenkins's contacts (and ability to get you to the top of the queue) with some of the best specialists and consultants working today are second to none. Quick referrals follow and will be covered by most health insurers.

Whether you think highly detailed health assessments are a good thing is, of course, a matter of opinion. There are some who would rather not know what's under the bonnet and some who believe that these evaluations are creating a cohort of GP-bothering "worried well". Personally, I'd rather be highly alert to even the smallest thing that may be dealt with than be blissfully ignorant, but have three months to live.

For the investment of just one day of your life, at less than the cost of an entry-level, secondhand Hermès Kelly bag, you get the most advanced imaging equipment and tests with world-class experts interpreting the results. It's one hell of an MOT.

From £7,200, [echelon.health](http://echelon.health)