

Nuclear Medicine

Nuclear Medicine is the branch of medical imaging that uses special radio-active materials (radiotracers) to enable doctors to diagnose various conditions.

Preparation

When booking your procedure, you will be advised of any preparation required. Let us know if you are breast feeding, pregnant or possibly pregnant, as this may influence the timing and type of test recommended. In addition, certain drugs may alter the results of a test and may have to be stopped for a few days prior to the examination. This applies particularly to scanning of the kidneys, thyroid gland, and heart. Again, this would be discussed at the time of making your appointment.

Procedure

You will be given a small dose of radiopharmaceutical. The specific substance and the method of its delivery (whether it be by injection into a vein, through a breathing apparatus or by mouth) depends on which particular nuclear medicine test you are having.

The substance administered will go to a specific organ or part of the body (e.g., liver or bone). Some time after administration of the radiopharmaceutical, a device called a gamma camera will be placed near your body next to the organ being examined. The exact timing of this depends on the particular test. For example, the kidneys are scanned almost immediately after administration of the substance, whereas for a bone scan you will be asked to return approximately 3 hours after injection during which time the radiopharmaceutical will have been taken up by the bones.

Are there any side effects?

The injection does not hurt and there is no iodine in it so you should not have any flushing or "funny" feeling. Side effects such as nausea, vomiting or a rash are very uncommon, occurring in approximately 1 in 10,000 people.

After the procedure you are able to drive a car and eat and drink normally.

WHAT if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

If there is a possibility of pregnancy we prefer to delay the test unless it is absolutely necessary.

Some of the tests may need to be changed if you are breastfeeding.

Please tell us when you make your booking and we will discuss it with you.

How long will I have the radiotracer in me?

The chemicals break down by themselves in a short time. Most are undetectable within 24-36 hours.

The amount of radioactivity is similar or often less than ordinary x-ray procedures.

Will I glow in the dark?

Absolutely not! There is only a very small amount of radioactivity in the injection and this disappears fairly quickly. After the scan, you do not have to take any precautions at all.

WILL IT HURT?

A scan involves nothing more painful than an injection into a vein, rather like a blood test.

How long will the procedure take?

This varies from scan to scan. Normally there is a delay between the injection and the scan that can range from several minutes to several hours and occasionally to several days. This allows time for the radiopharmaceutical to lodge in the system being examined.

For a bone scan, you have an intravenous injection in the morning and then are asked to come back approximately 3 hours later for the scan.

The nuclear physician will then examine the films and write a report to your doctor.

Please contact your referring doctor to discuss the results.

PLEASE BRING ANY PREVIOUS X-RAYS OR SCANS WITH YOU ON THE DAY OF YOUR EXAMINATION.

CONFIRM ANY PREPARATION REQUIRED WITH STAFF WHEN MAKING YOUR APPOINTMENT.

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Your doctor may request to go filmless

With the growing use of digital imaging, Ultrascan Radiology is giving doctors the opportunity to not receive hard copy films and to replace them with electronic reports and images – in other words, go “filmless”.

If your referring doctor elects to go “filmless,” once you have completed your medical imaging examination, you will no longer have to wait for x-ray films. The images will be sent electronically to your doctor’s computer together with a report from our Radiologist.

If you require films in the future, all films are stored digitally and can be requested at anytime with 24 hour notice.

NUCLEAR MEDICINE IS PERFORMED AT OUR
KANWAL, BRISBANE WATERS & GOSFORD CLINICS

Central Coast Radiology & Nuclear Medicine clinics

Erina

194 The Entrance Road, Erina 2250
Ph: 4365 1866 | Fax: 4365 1814

Long Jetty

4/13-15 Thompson Street, Long Jetty 2261
Ph: 4332 5532 | Fax: 4332 6262

Brisbane Waters

21 Vidler Avenue, Woy Woy 2256
(in Brisbane Waters Private Hospital)
Radiology: Ph: 4343 1066 | Fax: 4344 2171
Nuclear Medicine: Ph: 4342 2061 | Fax: 4342 7681

Gosford (Nuclear Medicine)

99-101 Holden Street, Gosford 2250
Ph: 4323 1844 | Fax: 4323 1261

Kanwal

654 Pacific Highway, Kanwal 2259
(in the Medical Complex at Wyong Hospital)
Radiology: Ph: 4393 0200 | Fax: 4393 0201
Nuclear Medicine: Ph: 4393 1000 | Fax: 4393 2111

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