

Nuclear Medicine

Your Parathyroid Washout Scan

Your doctor would like you to have a Nuclear Medicine Parathyroid Washout scan and has arranged for you to visit our department. We would like your visit to be as pleasant as possible and hope this leaflet will answer some of the questions you may have.

WHAT IS A PARATHYROID WASHOUT SCAN?

A parathyroid scan is a test to show the function of your parathyroid glands. It is used to investigate and localise any overactive parathyroid glands in your neck. A small amount of radioactivity is used to obtain a picture of your thyroid and parathyroids and this will help your doctor to understand your illness.

IS THE SCAN SAFE?

Yes. We will ensure that the amount of radiation you receive is as small as possible. The radioactivity leaves the body very quickly and it will not make you feel sick or sleepy.

DO I NEED TO PREPARE FOR THE SCAN?

No, you do not need to do anything special. You can eat and drink normally. You should keep taking your tablets.

HOW IS THE SCAN PERFORMED?

Shortly after you arrive you will be given a small injection into a vein in your arm or hand. The injection contains a small amount of radioactivity, but is harmless with no side effects. You will then lie on a bed and a special camera will be positioned close to you for about 10 minutes. You will need to return to the department approximately 1 and, possibly, 2 hours after your first scan for further pictures which may take up to 1 hour to perform.

Your appointment letter will tell you the time to attend for the scans.

Once you have had your injection, if you need to go to the toilet, you will need to use our special patient toilet – please ask at reception for the door code. It's important that you sit down while using this toilet.

IS THERE ANYTHING I SHOULD TELL THE STAFF BEFORE THE SCAN?

Would women please tell us if you are pregnant or if you think you may be pregnant. Also, please inform us if you are breast-feeding. Women between the ages of 12 and 55 will be asked to sign a form on the day of their test to confirm they are not pregnant. If there is any doubt, we are legally obliged to perform a pregnancy test before proceeding.

Please tell the staff if you are planning to travel abroad within one week of your scan.

WHAT CAN I DO AFTER THE SCAN?

You can go home or to work. You can drive a car, eat and drink normally and continue taking your tablets.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE RESULTS?

We cannot give you the results of your test. We will send a report to the doctor who asked for the scan as soon as possible. They will arrange your follow-up appointment.