

Nuclear Medicine

Your Shunt Patency Scan

Your doctor would like you to have a Nuclear Medicine 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 THE SCAN FOR?

The test is to assess the patency of your ventricular-peritoneal shunt. We do this by taking pictures with a special camera. A small amount of radioactivity is used to take these pictures. The pictures will help your doctor understand your illness.

IS THE SCAN SAFE?

Yes. We will make sure 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 and keep taking your tablets.

WHAT DOES THE SCAN INVOLVE?

Shortly after you arrive your neurosurgeon will inject some radioactivity into the shunt reservoir. The injection contains a small amount of a radioactive tracer. It is harmless with no side effects. You will then be scanned with a special camera. We will take pictures of your head, then chest to abdomen for about 10mins. These pictures may be repeated 20, 40mins and 2hrs later until the radioactivity has reached your abdomen. No discomfort is involved.

Your appointment letter will tell you the time of the injection and the times you should return for the scan.

HOW LONG WILL WE BE AT THE HOSPITAL?

Please allow 2 hours for your appointment.

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 then, by law, we have to perform a pregnancy test before we do the test.

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, but please avoid close contact with babies and young children for the following 72 hours. You can drive a car, eat and drink normally and continue taking your tablets.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE RESULTS OF THE SCAN?

We are not able to give you the results of the test on the day of your appointment. A report will go to the doctor who asked for the test. The doctor will arrange for you to get the results.

WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT THE SCAN?

Please ring us on the number above and we will try to answer any questions or concerns that you have.