

## Additional Information

### **Can the patient take any steps to protect against radiation?**

If you have had a Nuclear Medicine scan in the recent past, inform the staff member to ensure that tests are not duplicated unnecessarily.

### **The following precautions need to be observed for 24 hours after your Melanoma Sentinel Node scan:**

Patients should drink plenty of fluids and empty their bladders frequently. This helps to clear the injected material from the body. Patients should observe careful hygiene when going to the toilet during this period. It is advisable to flush the toilet twice after use.

## Further Information

### **Directions– Beaumont Hospital:**

The Nuclear Medicine Department is located on the Lower Ground Floor of Beaumont Hospital. Please check in at the Main X-ray Reception on arrival.

### **Who do I contact if I am unable to attend/ have queries?**

If you have any questions, require further information, have specific requirements, please contact the Nuclear Medicine Secretaries on: **01-8092786**.

### **Young children and pregnant women should not accompany patients to Nuclear medicine.**

**If there is any chance you may be pregnant, please inform the Nuclear Medicine Department prior to your appointment on 01 809 2792**

# Beaumont Imaging & Interventional Directorate



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## PATIENT INFORMATION

### LEAFLET:

## NUCLEAR MEDICINE MELANOMA SENTINEL NODE SCAN



NM Melanoma Sentinel Node Scan  
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<http://www.beaumont.ie/nm>

## Introduction

A Nuclear Medicine Melanoma Sentinel Node Scan has been requested for you and this leaflet explains what the scan involves and what you need to do to prepare for your scan. Your Nuclear Medicine scan will help make a diagnosis or monitor your treatment.

## What is Radiation?

Radiation is a form of energy transmitted through space in the form of waves such as Electromagnetic radiation, eg. heat waves, visible light, radio waves or microwaves.

## What is a Nuclear Medicine Melanoma Sentinel Node Scan?

In the Nuclear Medicine Department you will be injected with a small amount of a radioactive 'tracer' or isotope into skin close to the melanoma site. This material is carried in the lymphatic fluid to the lymph vessels and is trapped in the sentinel node, which can be seen on the nuclear medicine scan. This scan only shows where the sentinel node is located and NOT whether it contains tumour or not.

## What is a gamma camera?

A gamma camera detects radiation coming from your body and forms a picture using sophisticated computer programmes. The camera consists of a flat detector which passes over the body.

## What will happen during the scan?

There is no special preparation for this scan. You may eat and drink normally beforehand.

Your scan will be done approximately 30 minutes after the injection. You may be required to change into a hospital gown and remove any metal objects from your person, such as keys, coins, belt prior to the scan.

Your scan will be done lying down on the gamma camera. The scan will take approximately 15 minutes– 1 hour to complete. On occasion it may be necessary to perform a second scan after a period of time has passed. Your radiographer will let you know if this is required or not.

You should not feel any different after your injection. The procedure will not affect your ability to drive and you do not need someone to accompany you, unless you so wish.

## How does a Nuclear Medicine scan differ from an X-ray?

Nuclear Medicine patients are administered substances that emit radiation and which enable staff to investigate processes that are happening in the patient's body. The amount of radiation is similar to that used in X-ray. In Nuclear Medicine the patient is emitting radiation for a period after the substance is administered. For Sentinel Node scans, the radiation can remain in the body for up to 24 hours. Your Radiographer will advise you on the precautions you will need to apply after your Sentinel Node scan. These precautions should be followed for 24 hours after your scan.

## Will I receive much radiation?

No– the amount of radiation you receive is very small and the risks are low. Your doctor will have weighed the benefit of improved diagnosis of your condition against the small risk of the radiation exposure.