

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. In general patients should drink plenty of fluids and empty their bladders frequently on the day of the scan. This helps to clear the injected material from the body. Patients should observe careful hygiene when going to the toilet during this period

Are there any precautions that need to be observed in the 24 hour period after a nuclear medicine injection? YES

During this 24 hour period it is recommended that patients avoid spending long periods of time (in excess of 30 mins) in close contact with young children or pregnant women.

Important information

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

If there is any chance you may be **pregnant** or if you are **breast-feeding**, please inform the nuclear medicine department **prior** to your appointment. (01-7974440).

Location

The Nuclear Medicine department is located in the Radiology Department, on the lower ground floor of the hospital. Please check in at the main x-ray reception desk on arrival.

Who do I contact if I am unable to attend?

Please contact 01-7974440 if you wish to reschedule your appointment

Nuclear Medicine
Radiology Department
Beaumont Hospital
Dublin 9.
Tel: (01) 7974440
Fax: (01) 8092576
Web site: www.beaumont.ie

Date Issued: January 2015

Review date: January 2016

Author(s): Radiography Management Team

Approved by: Imaging and Interventional Radiology Directorate Team



**Beaumont Hospital
Imaging and Interventional
Radiology Directorate**

Patient Information

**Welcome to the
Nuclear Medicine
Department**

Introduction

A Nuclear Medicine 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.

What is radiation?

Radiation is a form of electrical and magnetic disturbance that transports energy. For example it is radiation that brings energy to us from the sun

What is a Radionuclide Imaging Scan?

In nuclear medicine you will be injected with a small amount of a radioactive 'tracer' which travels to the specific part of the body requiring examination. After the injection pictures are taken with a gamma camera.

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 area of interest.

Do I need to prepare for the scan?

For most scans you can eat, drink and take your medications as normal, although for certain scans there are some preparations needed. These instructions will be stated in the accompanying appointment letter. If you are diabetic you should take your insulin as normal.

How will the injection affect me?

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.

What will happen during the scan?

After your injection you will be either scanned immediately, asked to wait, or asked to return up to three hours later for your scan. This will depend on the type of nuclear medicine scan requested.

You may be asked to undress for your scan. Your scan will be done lying or sitting next to the gamma camera.



Will I receive much radiation?

No. The amount of radiation you receive is very small and the risks are low. The radiation dose you receive from this scan is similar to that which you would receive from your environment over a period of 1 to 2 years. Your doctor will have weighed the benefit of improved diagnosis of your condition against the small risk of the radiation exposure.

How does a nuclear medicine scan differ from an X-ray?

Nuclear Medicine patients are administered substances (usually in the form of an injection) 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. Generally speaking, the radiation levels from a nuclear medicine patient are reduced to insignificant levels over a 24 hour period