



Information About Your Iodine 123 Thyroid Uptake Scan

Contact information

Phone: 0121 371 2327

Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm

What is an Iodine 123 Thyroid Uptake Scan?

This scan is a Nuclear Medicine test that looks at how your thyroid gland is working. This test is performed over a two-day period.

Is it safe?

You will be injected with a small amount of radioactive tracer to take pictures of your thyroid. The risk associated with this is low.

The small risk from this is outweighed by the information gained from having the scan.

A medical professional will have checked your referral to make sure this test is appropriate for you.

If you have any concerns or would like further information, please contact the department. If you do not understand why you need to have this scan, please speak to the Doctor who referred you.

For all patients aged between 11–55

If you are pregnant, or there is a chance that you may be pregnant, please contact the department as soon as possible, as the scan may be postponed if it is not urgent.

In line with national guidance from the Society of Radiographers, inclusive practice (or behaving in a way that makes all people or groups of people feel included and valued) is integral to effective healthcare.

If you are aged between 11 and 55, you will be asked to sign a form asking questions about any potential pregnancy and your registered sex at birth. This is to ensure safe testing and accurate diagnosis when reviewing your images, as we will need to be aware of any potential variations in your anatomy.

This information will be stored sensitively and confidentially.

Please also contact the department if you are breastfeeding, as we may need to give you special instructions.

If you require any further information about any of this or if you have any questions, please contact the department.

Preparing for your scan

You will receive an accompanying appointment letter asking you to call the department to provide a list of any medication you currently take.

We may need you to stop some medication for a few weeks prior to your scan and we will check this with your referring Doctor.

Please let the department know if you have recently had a CT scan with contrast (within the last three months) or if you have a known reaction to iodine.

You will need to follow a **low iodine diet for five days prior to the scan**. A diet sheet will be enclosed with your letter and this leaflet.

Attending your scan

Please ensure you are on time for your appointment. If you are unable to attend or are going to be delayed, please telephone the department at the earliest opportunity. If you are late for your appointment, it may have to be rescheduled.

Please **DO NOT** bring children or anyone who is/may be pregnant with you to your appointment.

Please only bring a relative, friend or carer with you if it is essential to do so. In order to accompany you to some of the areas in the department where restrictions are in place, it may be necessary to provide your relative, friend or carer with further information before permitting entry.

If you are travelling via hospital transport, please contact the department ahead of attending, as we may need to adjust the time slot to offer you an earlier appointment. There is a telephone number in your appointment letter to contact Hospital Transport.

Your injection

A small amount of radioactive tracer will be injected into a vein in your arm, hand or foot. This is much the same as a blood test you may have had in the past.

After the injection, you will be asked to wait for about four hours before your scan. This is to allow the radioactive tracer to be absorbed into your body.

We will give you a time to return for your scan at this point. You are more than welcome to leave the department during this time.

Your scan

You may be asked to change into a hospital gown in order to remove any metal objects like buttons, belts, zips, chains or hooks. Alternatively, you may choose to wear comfortable clothing with no metal parts.

The scan pictures are taken by a special machine called a gamma camera. You will be asked to lie flat on your back on a special couch. The first part of the scan typically takes 15 minutes and it is important to keep still during this time.

The gamma camera will then rotate around you, moving quite close. This part of the scan can take up to 20 minutes. You will then be free to leave.

You will be in the department for approximately five hours in total, although you are free to leave between the injection and the scan.

At 24 hours after your injection, we will perform another scan where the special camera rotates around you, taking approximately 20 minutes. You may also have a CT scan at this time to help locate any abnormalities.

If you think lying on the couch may be difficult, you are claustrophobic or you would like to see one of our cameras prior to attending, please call the department before your appointment.

After your scan

It is very unlikely you will feel any side-effects after the injection or scan, but please contact the Nuclear Medicine Department as soon as possible if you have any concerns.

After your scan there will be some radioactivity left in your body, but this does not present a significant risk to others around you. We ask you to drink plenty of fluids and to pass urine frequently as this will help clear the radioactivity from your body.

After 24 hours, most of the radioactivity will have left your body.

For the day of your scan, we advise you minimise any close contact with babies, small children and anyone who is pregnant, but there is no need to stop giving children essential love and care. If you have any questions about this, please contact the department.

Travelling abroad

It is perfectly safe for you to travel abroad after your scan, but many airports and seaports are equipped with very sensitive radiation detectors, which could detect the small amount of radioactivity left in your body. Please let staff know if you intend to travel abroad within one week of your scan.

Your results

Your scan will be reviewed by a specialist doctor, who will issue a report. The report will be sent to the Doctor who asked for the scan and not your GP. This is because the Doctor, who asked for your scan, may have the results of other tests, and can tell you how this affects your care.

Information about you

As part of your care, information will be shared only where necessary with clinical staff. Information may be used to help train other staff, or to improve our quality of care. It will all be treated as confidential and your details will be removed where possible.

Translation and interpretation service

Should you require an interpreter, please contact the department prior to your appointment so that we arrange this.

If you do not wish to use the hospital translation service, it is possible for a member of your family or a friend to translate for you, but this must be done in accordance with hospital policy and your friends / family member will need to sign a disclaimer.

If you require this information in another format or language, please contact the department.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offer impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive and negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

Please ask a member of staff for directions to the onsite Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) office. PALS can also be emailed at pals@uhb.nhs.uk

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training, and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe procedures for this purpose but only with your consent.

More Information

All staff would like to make your visit as pleasant as possible. If you have any concerns or ideas to improve our services, please talk to a member of the team or ask at Reception for a Patient Satisfaction Survey form.

Accessibility

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