



Information about your parathyroid dual isotope scan

Contact information

Phone: 0121 371 2327 **Opening hours:** Monday to Friday, 08:30 to 17:00

What is a parathyroid dual isotope scan?

Your parathyroid glands sit behind the thyroid gland in your neck.

The scan uses a small amount of radiation to take images of your parathyroid glands.

You will have a cannula inserted into a vein and, using this, we will administer two different radioactive tracers approximately two hours apart.

We will then scan you using a special camera to detect any issues with your parathyroid glands. You should be prepared to be at the hospital for between three and four hours.

Is it safe?

For this scan, you will be injected with a small amount of two radioactive tracers and 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 the request 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 know you are pregnant, or there is a chance 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 breast feeding, 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 have received an accompanying letter asking you to contact the department to arrange your scan.

You will be asked for a list of your current medication, so please have this to hand when calling.

It may be necessary to stop some medications before your scan. We will ask your referring doctor about stopping any medication.

Please notify us if you have had a CT scan within the last three months.

You will also be asked to follow a **low iodine diet for five days before and on the day of the scan**. A diet rich in iodine could interfere with your scan.

Examples of foods containing iodine are spinach, oily fish, cod liver oil (or supplements containing iodine), iodised salt or sea salt and artificially coloured pink or red foods (i.e. containing the colouring E127). You should reduce your intake of dairy products and eggs.

Enclosed is a leaflet explaining the reasons for limiting foods that are high in iodine and suggestions for low iodine alternative foods.

Attending your scan

It is very important to be 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 on your appointment letter to contact Hospital Transport.

Your Injections

A cannula will be inserted into a vein in your arm, or hand and a small amount of radioactive tracer will be injected through this.

The cannula will remain in your arm or hand until all of the procedure is completed. We will start scanning you approximately two hours after your first injection.

Your scan

Before the scan you will be asked to go to the toilet to empty your bladder.

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

The scans are taken by a special machine called a gamma camera. The camera will move close to you whilst it takes pictures.

You will be asked to lie flat on your back on a special couch, with your neck slightly extended. We will make sure you are as comfortable as possible.

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

The scanning will take approximately one hour in total.

At the start of your scan, you will be scanned for approximately 10 minutes and then another small amount of a different radioactive tracer will be given through the cannula that is already in place.

There will be a pause of approximately 10 minutes to allow for the second tracer to be absorbed into your parathyroid glands.

The camera will then take further pictures around your neck and chest. This will take approximately 30 minutes.

You may also have a CT scan at this time to help locate any abnormalities.

After your scan

It is very unlikely you will feel any side-effects after the injection or scan but, if you think you have, please let the department know as soon as possible.

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 drink plenty of fluids and 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 rest of the day, we advise that you try to limit close contact (within an arm's length) with pregnant people, babies, and young children, as much as possible, 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 and we can provide you with documentation to take with you.

Your results

Your scan will be looked at by a specialist doctor, who will issue a report. The report will be sent back to the doctor who requested the scan and not your GP. This is because the doctor who requested 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 confidentially 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.

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.

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.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offer impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We listen to feedback (positive and negative), answer questions and help resolve concerns. Please ask a member of staff for directions to the onsite Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) office. PALS can also be contacted on 0121 371 3280, or email pals@uhb.nhs.uk

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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