

### What is a radioisotope scan?

It is a simple procedure, similar to an X-ray, in which a small amount of radioactive material is used to provide pictures that will help your doctor understand your condition.

### What does it involve?

The radioactive material is usually injected into a vein in your arm. You then wait for a time ranging from a few minutes to several days (depending on the type of scan) before pictures are taken with a machine called a gamma camera.

If there is a wait between your injection and scan, you will be free to leave the department. Taking the pictures normally takes between 30 - 90 minutes. You will need to lie or sit still while the pictures are being taken.

When the scan is finished, you can return home. The results will be sent to the doctor requesting the scan.

### Will it hurt?

Only the pinprick of the injection may hurt a little - it is similar to a blood test that you may have had before. You should not expect any side-effects from the injection, it will not make you feel sleepy or prevent you from driving a car.

### Do I need to prepare for the scan?

Please read your appointment letter very carefully, this will tell you if any preparation is required for your examination. If there is no preparation, you may eat and drink normally before the examination.

### Can I take my medication?

For most examinations there is no need to alter your regular medication. Your appointment letter will advise you call us if there are tablets that may affect your test.

### Is the amount of radiation dangerous?

No, even though you will be injected with a radioactive material the amount involved is very small indeed and is similar to an equivalent X-ray examination.

### Are there any special precautions afterwards?

We do advise you to avoid prolonged close contact with children or pregnant women to avoid exposing them to any unnecessary radiation.

For most scans these restrictions apply for the remainder of the day. The department will contact you should the restriction time be longer.

For children under investigation, the radiation dose will be so low that there is no need to observe the above precaution.

### Note for female patients

Please contact the department before your appointment if there is a chance you may be pregnant or if you are breastfeeding.

### What happens to the scan?

Your scan will be seen by a doctor in the department and a report will be sent to the doctor who asked us to do the scan.

Please do not ask for an interpretation from the technologist performing the examination.

### General

There are no lockable facilities in Radiology. We strongly recommend that any valuables are left at home. Please be aware that CCDHB does not take responsibility for any loss or damage of personal property belonging to patients whilst on CCDHB premises.

### Contact us

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