

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 child's condition.

Where do I go?

Please arrive 1 ½ hours before the first appointment time.

Children under 8 yrs of age should first report to Childrens Outpatients, Level 5, Grace Neil Block

Children age 8 -16 yrs of age should report direct to the Radiology department.

What does it involve?

Almost all radioisotope scans will involve a small injection into the arm, hand or foot. Children aged 1 year and over can have local anaesthetic cream (Emla cream) to numb the injection site. This needs to be applied at least 1 hour before the injection. The cream is not suitable for children under 1 year old.

If there is a wait between the injection and scan, you will normally be free to leave the department. Taking the pictures normally takes between 15 and 60 minutes. Your child will need to lie still while the pictures are taken. The technologist may use Velcro straps during the scan to assist in keeping your child still.

What happens afterwards?

When the scan is finished, you can return home. 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 the technologist performing the examination for the results.

Will it hurt?

Only the pinprick of the injection may hurt a little - it is similar to a blood test that your child may have had before. However, the Emla cream will take away most

of the discomfort. There are no untoward effects from the injection

Is there any preparation?

Unless you receive any special instructions in your appointment letter, your child will be able to eat and drink normally before and after the test. It is often helpful to feed a baby immediately before the scan as this can make them more settled and sleepy.

If your child is not toilet trained you should change their nappy just before the scan. Please bring a spare nappy with you

Is the radiation dangerous?

No, even though your child will be injected with a radioactive material the amount involved is very small and is equivalent to that of a similar X-ray examination. Your child is safe to be around other children. There will be no effects on your child after the scan.

How can I make the experience easier for my child?

You will be able to stay with your child throughout the test. Please bring with you any favourite books, toys or DVDs that may amuse or distract your child during the procedure.

If your child is very anxious about the test it may be helpful to visit the department in advance to meet the staff and to see the equipment used for the scan. If you feel this could help your child please ask the staff to arrange this for you.

Sedation is not routinely used for scans, however should you have any concerns regarding your child's ability to remain still please contact the department to discuss.

Contact us

Phone: (04) 806 2193

Hours: 8am-4pm, Monday to Friday

Email: radiology.admin@ccdhb.org.nz