

What is a Nuclear Medicine Sentinel Node scan of the breast?

A Nuclear Medicine Sentinel Node scan is a procedure to identify lymph nodes draining from the breast area.

This scan is usually performed the day before your breast surgery to enable your surgeon to find the sentinel (first in line) node so that a biopsy can be performed.

Preparation for the scan

No preparation is required.

Please contact the department if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

About the procedure

You will be given two appointment times for this procedure.

During the first appointment you will have an injection of a small amount of radioactive tracer just beneath your nipple. The injection may sting a little, but this wears off immediately. It is then taken up by your lymph nodes over the next few hours. We will ask you to massage the area for a few minutes after the injection to assist movement in the lymph channels.

You will return in the afternoon for imaging of your chest. The scan will take approximately thirty (30) minutes and, once completed, the technologist may also mark on your skin the location of the sentinel node.

Is it safe?

There are no associated side effects from the radioactive injection.

The amount of radioactive material given for the procedure is very small. You will not need to take any precautions after the scan.

Results

The Nuclear Medicine Physician will review your scan. The results and images will be available for your surgeon prior to surgery.

Morning	Break	Afternoon
Injection (± 30 minutes)		Imaging (± 30 minutes)

Contact us

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Hours: 8am-4pm, Monday to Friday

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