Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Isotope Scanning

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Isotope Scanning

Patient Information

Nuclear Medicine Department, Royal Albert Edward Infirmary

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What is an isotope scan?

An isotope scan is a test in which a small amount of radioactivity is injected into the body, usually into a vein in the arm.

This is then used to obtain a series of scan pictures of different organs.

There are no side effects to this.

After the injection you may have to wait before the scan pictures are taken. This will depend upon which area of the body is to be scanned.

If your appointment letter states that you will have a wait of over an hour, you will be able to leave the department during this time.

You may eat and drink normally unless your letter states otherwise.

Benefit of scan

This scan will provide information, which along with the results of other tests you may have had, will help your doctor with your diagnosis.

Alternatives

This scan is not like an ordinary x-ray. The information we obtain will show how your body is functioning. None of the other types of scan or x-rays provide functional information.

Risks

The risks are negligible. A small amount of radiation is injected, but with modern imaging equipment this is kept to a minimum. The benefits of the information gained outweigh any risk.

Common questions

Is the radiation dangerous?

No, the amount of radiation received is very small, usually no more than a normal x-ray examination. It will disappear from the body naturally after a few hours.

Do I need to stop taking my medication?

For most tests there is no need to change any regular treatment. Your doctor will inform you if you do need to stop taking your medication.

Will I be going into a tunnel?

To take good quality scan pictures the camera does have to be close to the body, but you do not have to go into a tunnel.

How long before I get my results?

The scan results will be sent to your consultant, usually within two weeks.

Contact information

For any further queries contact us on **01942 822421.** Our opening hours are 8:30am until 5pm, Monday to Friday.



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