

# Thyroid Scan



**Patients must also read their appointment letter  
and any enclosures carefully**

## What is a Thyroid Scan?

---

A thyroid scan is a diagnostic procedure, which looks at the function of your thyroid gland. It is different to an x-ray and other types of scans. It involves an injection of a small amount of radioactive liquid and imaging with a special camera.

## How do you prepare for this scan?

---

**It is important that you follow the instructions in your appointment letter with regard to medication.**

You can eat, drink and take other medication as normal.

**Females:** Due to the radiation involved, there is a very small risk to an unborn or breastfeeding child. Therefore, it is very important that you let us know in advance if you are, or may be, **pregnant** or **breastfeeding**.

## Who can accompany you for this scan?

---

It is fine if you want someone to come with you on the day of your scan. However, because we only have one waiting room, we advise you not to be accompanied by children or pregnant women, to help minimise the exposure to these people.

## Finding the Nuclear Medicine Department

---

The Nuclear Medicine Department is located in Zone C, Department C16.

## How is the scan performed?

---

A technician will inject a small amount of slightly radioactive liquid into a vein in your arm. This will not make you feel any different. You will then be asked to stay in the waiting room for about 15-20 minutes. You will then be asked to drink a cup of water and to lie on a scanning bed. A special camera will be positioned over your neck and one or two pictures will be taken.

Each picture takes several minutes, during which time you will need to lie still and breathe normally. You will not feel any different during the scan. If you are wearing a necklace, it will need to be removed. You will **not** have to remove any clothing. You will **not** be enclosed in a tunnel, and you will **not** be left alone during the scan.

## How will this scan affect you?

---

You should not feel any different. The procedure will not affect your ability to drive, so it is not necessary for anyone to accompany you on your journey home unless you so wish.

## Are there any risks from the radioactive liquid?

---

The radioactive liquid is used as sparingly as possible and the benefits of this scan far outweigh the small risk from radiation. The radiation dose you will receive is similar to the radiation that you receive from natural sources in a year. The injection will not affect the way you feel and the radioactive substance is quickly eliminated from your body. You can help this process by drinking plenty of fluids and emptying your bladder more often than normal after your injection.

## Will the radiation affect other people?

---

The radiation dose to other people around you is low and is therefore not a cause for concern.

## How will you get the results of your scan?

---

You will not be given any results on the day of the scan. The consultant radiologist will, within a few days, send a report to the doctor or specialist who referred you for the scan.

## Travelling after your scan

---

Some airports, seaports, train stations, bus stations and major sporting event venues have installed very sensitive radiation detectors. It is possible that these detectors may be triggered by the small amount of radioactivity remaining in your body on the days following the scan. Therefore, if you are planning to travel within **seven days** following your scan, it is recommended that you carry your appointment letter to show to officials if necessary.

## Additional Information:

---

If you have any concerns or questions with regard to this procedure, or you need this information in another format such as larger print, please telephone the Nuclear Medicine Department on the phone number below:

**Nuclear Medicine Department: 01225 824076**