

Nuclear Medicine **Bone Scan**

Patient Information Sheet

A Nuclear Medicine Bone Scan images the function of your bones using a Gamma Camera and CT scanner.

You have been given **two (sometimes three)** appointment times;

- **On the first appointment**, you will be given an injection of a small amount of radioactive tracer into a vein. This does not have any side effects and will not impair your ability to drive.
- **The afternoon appointment(s)** are to image your bones once the radioactive tracer has been absorbed.

Preparation

You may eat and take your medication as normal.

In the 24 hour period before your appointment drink at least 1 litre of fluids (preferably water). This will make giving the injection easier. You can use the toilet as often as you need to.

Wear or bring clothes that **do not contain metal clips or zips**.

After you have had the injection, we would like you to drink extra fluid (preferably 1 litre of water) and empty your bladder often. This helps to improve the images.

Please bring a spare pad or panty liner with you if worn daily.

If possible, please come to your appointment alone as we can only accommodate a small number of people in our waiting room.

Are there any risks from the radioactive tracer?

The radioactive tracer 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 from your injection and scan is similar to the radiation received from natural sources in 4 years. Drinking plenty of fluids and emptying your bladder regularly will help to remove the radiation.

There are no restrictions for spending time with adults after your scan; however, **avoid close contact with children and pregnant women for 8 hours** after your injection.

You should also use the toilet sitting down for **24 hours** to avoid splashes as your urine will be slightly radioactive.

Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

Let us know in advance if you may be pregnant or are breastfeeding.

This is important because of the small risk of childhood cancer from the radiation that we use.

If you have male healthcare records and were registered female at birth, please talk to the technologist at your appointment so that they can rule out the possibility of pregnancy. This information will not be recorded or shared without your consent.

How is the scan performed?

The main scan will be performed **2 to 3 hours after your injection**.

This scan will take up to **60 minutes**.

You will be asked to **empty your bladder immediately before the scan** starts and **remove any metal** including clothing with zips or clips as well as coins, keys, belts and jewellery. You will also be asked, if applicable, to change into a clean, **dry** pad or panty liner before the scan.

You will need to lie flat and still for the duration of the scan, the scanner is not noisy but you will pass through a large tunnel. If you have any concerns please let the Technologist know.

We use a Gamma Camera to image the tracer in your bones and a CT scan which uses X-rays.

After your scan

Results

Results will be sent to the doctor or specialist who referred you for the scan in 2/3 weeks.

Travelling after your scan

Some major event/ transport venues have very sensitive radiation detectors. These detectors could be triggered by the small amount of radioactivity remaining in your body on the days following your scan. If you're planning to travel within **seven days** following your scan, we recommend that you carry your appointment letter with you.

Information for other hospitals or care homes

*Within the **four days** following your scan:*

If you are admitted to a care home or hospital (other than the RUH), or if you are cared for by a healthcare worker in your home, please ask them to contact the RUH Clinical Imaging and Measurement Department. Their employer might need to register with the Health and Safety Executive to show that their staff are aware of the small amount of radioactivity that is present for a few days after your scan.

If you have any concerns or questions about your scan, or you need this information in another format such as larger print, please telephone: **01225 824080**

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Zone C, Department C16
Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG
01225 824080 | www.ruh.nhs.uk

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone **01225 825656**