

# Nuclear Medicine

## Kidney Function Test (GFR)

### Patient Information Sheet

A GFR (Glomerular Filtration Rate) test, is used to assess how well your kidneys are functioning. It involves an injection of a small amount of radioactive tracer followed by a series of blood samples.

### Preparation for your appointment

- Please **do not drink caffeine** from 10pm the evening before and day of your test
- Please **keep hydrated (by drinking water)**.
- Please eat a **normal balanced diet** but do not have any extra protein supplements (eg protein shakes)

**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.

*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 test far outweigh the small risk from radiation. The radiation dose you will receive is similar to the radiation received from natural sources in one week. Drinking plenty of fluids and emptying your bladder regularly will help to remove the radiation.

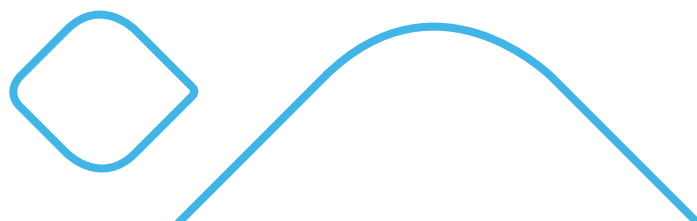
The radiation dose to people around you is low, therefore there is no cause for concern with being around other people after your injection. You should use the toilet sitting down for 24 hours following your injection as your urine will be slightly radioactive.

### Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

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

**If you are female and between the ages of 12 and 55, you will be asked to complete a form confirming that you are not pregnant or breastfeeding.**

If you were registered as female at birth and you are transgender with male healthcare records, please talk to the technologist at your appointment. You should let them know if there is any possibility that you could be pregnant, and also let them know if you are chestfeeding. This information will not be recorded or shared without your consent.



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## How is the test performed?

- A small amount of radioactive tracer will be injected into a vein in your arm. *This will not make you feel any different.*
- You will then have blood samples taken at **two, three, four** and **five** hours after the injection.
  - You are free to do as you please between the injection and the first blood sample being taken. However if you leave the hospital, it is important that you return to the Clinical Imaging and Measurement Department at the time told to you by the technician on the day.
  - Once we start taking blood samples, if we have inserted a cannula, we prefer that you stay on the hospital site between samples, but not in the Clinical Imaging and Measurement Department.

## After your appointment

**For 24 hours after your appointment** all patients should sit on the toilet when passing urine. This is to make sure that all the urine gets properly flushed down the toilet as it will be slightly radioactive.

### Results

Results will be sent to the doctor or specialist who referred you the day after your test.

### Travelling after your appointment

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 appointment. If you're planning to travel within **seven days** following your appointment, we recommend that you carry your appointment letter with you.

## Information for other hospitals or care homes

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

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 test.

If you have any concerns or questions about your appointment, or you need this information in another format such as larger print, please telephone the Clinical Imaging and Measurement Department. Clinical Imaging and Measurement: **01225 824080**

Clinical Imaging and Measurement Department  
Zone C, Department C16  
Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG  
01225 824080 | [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://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](mailto:ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net) or telephone **01225 825656**