

Preparation and duration

Scan	Preparation	Duration
Gallium scan	None	The study is usually in three parts. First is the injection which takes about five minutes. The scan is then performed on two consecutive days (24 and 48 hours or 48 and 72 hours after the injection). Each scan takes between 30 and 90 minutes.
Gastric emptying	Fast for 8 hours prior.	2.5 hours.
Colonic transit	You will need to stop your aperients. No other preparation is required.	The radiotracer is swallowed in the morning. This followed by 30 minute scans at 6, 24, 48, 72, 96 and 120 hours after.
Renal scan	You may need to stop some of your blood pressure medications. This will be discussed with your doctor prior to the scan. Please bring a list of your medications. You need to be well hydrated, so please try to drink about a litre of fluid (any beverage will be acceptable) prior to the scan, but you do not need a full bladder. There are no restrictions on food.	The study takes about one hour to complete. Sometimes the study needs to be repeated on another day with a blood pressure medication (captopril) being administered. If so, this adds another hour to the study. Alternatively, sometimes a diuretic (frusemide - which increases urine production) is also administered, which will also add one hour to the scanning time.

Location and opening hours

Nuclear medicine scans are performed only at The Calvary Hospital rooms (Strangways Terrace, North Adelaide, **(08) 8402 0270**). These rooms are open from 8.00am to 5.00pm on weekdays.

Free on-street parking is available for one and two hours throughout the day.

Please bring all your previous X-rays and scans with you to your appointment.



radiology SA

Patient Information Handout

Nuclear Medicine Scan



radiology SA

What is a nuclear medicine scan?

A nuclear medicine scan is a way to evaluate the function of some internal organs by using radioactive medications or 'radiotracers'. The radioactivity from these substances is captured on a special camera, and a doctor interprets the resulting images.

How is a nuclear medicine scan performed?

After explaining the procedure, a nuclear medicine specialist or technologist will administer the radioactive medication. This is usually by an injection into a vein in your arm, although some scans involve swallowing the radioactive medication. In most cases, there is a period of waiting before images of the organ are taken.

Are there any risks?

You will emit some radiation after the administration of the medication. The amount of radioactivity involved is small, and is comparable to other imaging procedures, such as CT scans.

This will gradually decline over a day and a half after the scan. Some isotopes last longer, in which case we will let you know at the time of your scan. Nuclear medicine studies are symptom-free for almost everyone. The risk of side effects is very low, and is outweighed by the benefit of being able to detect disease with the scan.

Preparation and duration

Scan	Preparation	Duration
Bone scan	None	The scan is in two parts. First is the injection, which may be followed by some scanning taking up to 20 minutes. Then there is a two to three hour wait (on very rare occasions, up to five hours) before more scanning, which takes between 30 and 60 minutes. You can leave the rooms between parts.
Lung scan	None	One hour.
Thyroid scan	You will need to stop your thyroid medication. This will be discussed with your doctor prior to the scan.	About one hour in total.
Parathyroid scan	None	You will be scanned after the injection for 30 minutes. Then there is a two to three hour break, during which you can leave the rooms. You return for a second scan which takes somewhere between 30 minutes and 1.5 hours.
Lacrimal scan	None	One hour.
Biliary scan	You should fast (no food, drink, or cigarettes) for eight hours prior. You may need to be given a narcotic (morphine) as part of the test, so please ensure that someone else drives you home.	Between 1.5 and 3 hours.
Liver and spleen scan	None	1.5 hours.
Cardiac stress test	You may need to stop some of your cardiac medications. This will be discussed with your doctor. 24 hours prior, you will need to avoid coffee and tea, (including decaffeinated varieties and herbal teas), as well as food containing caffeine. We advise milk, water or juice only. Have a light meal on the morning of the scan. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear for exercise.	The study is in two parts. The first (stress) part takes about two hours. The second (rest) part takes about one hour. There is a three to four hour gap in between when you may leave the rooms.