

Your Radionuclide Imaging Appointment

Diagnostic Imaging @ MB L1 (Mon – Fri, 8am – 6pm)

Patient Particulars:

Appointment Date/Time:

Estimated Fees for Outpatient:

Note:

- Please do not bring valuables or excess cash with you. Patients and visitors are responsible for personal belongings.
- No medical certificate can be issued for this appointment. Certificate of attendance will be given upon request.

Late arrival may result in rescheduling of appointment.

Please arrive at least 15 minutes before the appointed time to register and prepare for the procedure.

We appreciate your understanding should an unforeseen delay occur due to medical exigencies.

Kindly inform us if you are unable to keep to the scheduled appointment.

Please bring this leaflet on the day of your appointment

This publication is classified as Unclassified, Non-Sensitive

The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical conditions. Information is correct at time of printing (Feb/2013) and subject to revision without prior notice.

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Radionuclide Imaging

Patient Information Leaflet

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WHAT IS NUCLEAR MEDICINE?

Nuclear medicine is a safe, painless and cost-effective way of gathering information very early on in the progression of disease, long before the medical problem may become apparent with other diagnostic tests.

A small amount of chemical, called an isotope, is given (usually injected into a vein, although they may also be inhaled or swallowed) to you, the patient. This isotope releases a gamma ray similar to an x-ray. During the imaging session, a nuclear medicine technologist, who is specially qualified in the theory and practice of nuclear medicine, places the gamma camera close to your body. The gamma camera is used to follow the chemical we have given you. A number of different images may be seen and stored on the computer. The time needed to obtain each image will depend on the test. Further analysis of the images may be required afterwards.

You may breathe normally during the exam, but you may be instructed to remain as still as possible. Movement during certain tests could result in un-interpretable, blurred images. The camera does not produce any additional radiation. Therefore, multiple images can be taken without producing any additional radiation exposure. When the exam is completed, the nuclear medicine physician will review your images and discuss the results with your doctor.

For some tests, a blood or urine sample, instead of images, is taken. Although nuclear medicine is primarily used for diagnostic purposes, it is also used for therapeutic applications such as treatment of hyperthyroidism, thyroid cancer and pain relief from certain types of bone cancers. For some of these therapies, you don't need to have images taken.

IS THERE ANY SPECIAL PREPARATION?

This varies according to which test you will be having and this is best checked when you make your booking. These preparations are minor. If preparations are required, you will be notified prior to the test.

It is important that if you are breast feeding or if there is any chance you might be pregnant, that you make this clear at the time of your booking so that appropriate alternative arrangements can be made.

CAN I BRING MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO THE DEPARTMENT ON THE DAY OF EXAMINATION?

If you are an adult patient, only you will be allowed into the examination room. Therefore, if you have children, you are advised to leave your children, who are not patients, at home. If the patient is a young child, then only this child and one adult member of family will be allowed into the examination room.

PREGNANCY

Generally, nuclear medicine tests are not recommended for pregnant women because unborn babies have a greater sensitivity to radiation than children or adults. If you are pregnant or think that you are pregnant, your doctor may order a different type of diagnostic test.

BREAST FEEDING

If a woman is breast feeding and undergoing a nuclear medicine procedure, she should refrain from breast feeding for 24 hours after the injection. Therefore expression of milk or use of formula milk to cater for this period prior to the examination is advised.

RADIATION DOSE

The radiation dose you will receive is very small, so it is safe. Generally, there are no side-effects from this radiation. This small radiation dose is no more than that received during an x-ray. Most tracers pass quickly from the body through normal bodily functions. You are not made permanently radioactive.

ARE NUCLEAR MEDICINE PROCEDURES PERFORMED ON CHILDREN?

Yes, this is commonly performed on children with the dosage adjusted according to the child's size. Sedation is sometimes required, depending on the child and type of test being performed.

MAY I EAT OR DRINK BEFOREHAND?

For most exams, no preparation is required.

WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING WITH ME ON THE DAY OF MY NUCLEAR MEDICINE SCAN?

Bring all your previous scans and x-rays so that our radiologists can review the older studies. This will also help your doctor. Bring all medications which you are taking currently.

Many medications look exactly the same as one another. Bring your medications in their original dispensing containers as these containers will have the names of medications.

WHY IS THERE A DELAY BETWEEN TIME OF INJECTION AND THE SCAN?

In many types of nuclear medicine scans, it takes time for the administered or injected radiopharmaceutical to be taken up by the area of your body being studied. This can take minutes, hours or, in some cases, even days.

WILL I NEED TO BE ADMITTED?

Most examinations do not require you, the adult patient, to be admitted. It is easily performed on an out-patient basis. Young children, however, may need to be admitted for a day so that they can receive mild sedation prior to the scan.

WHY DO SOME PATIENTS NEED A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT TESTS?

A diagnosis is usually made with one nuclear medicine exam, but it may be necessary to compare or confirm the test results with another diagnostic study or studies to ensure the most accurate and conclusive understanding of your medical problem.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE TEST?

You should be able to resume your regular daily activities right after the test. If you were asked to temporarily stop taking any medication prior to the test or if your doctor changed your usual dosage because of the test, be sure to ask when and if you should resume taking your medications.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING MY TEST?

This pamphlet is for informational purposes and is not intended as a substitute for discussion between you and your doctor. What will take place during your particular test will depend on the test that has been requested.

For more information, please call us on 6772-4212 or email us at DDI_enquiries@nuhs.edu.sg