

Nuclear Medicine Children's Scans

Welcome to Nuclear Medicine

Your child has been asked to attend for a **Nuclear Medicine (radioisotope) scan** by their doctor. We hope this leaflet will answer some of the questions you may have, but feel free to contact the Department if you need any further information.

What is a Nuclear Medicine scan?

A small amount of radioactivity is used to obtain pictures of specific parts of the body, which will help the doctors to understand your child's condition.

Why is the appointment time so early?

We arrange for your child to attend the paediatric ward (**Bramble Ward**) so that **anaesthetic cream** can be applied before the injection. This numbs the skin where the injection will be given, so that there should only be slight discomfort.

Being early also enables the paediatric nurse to assess whether sedation may be required for the examination. The sedation used is not an anaesthetic, just medicine to help the child sleep during the scan. **Please follow any instructions included in the appointment letter regarding feeding as this is important when sedation is being considered.**

Does my child need to stop taking any medicines?

For most scans there is no need to stop any regular treatments. If your child needs to stop taking medication for the scan, the appointment letter will tell you.

What is involved?

The small amount of radioactive tracer is injected into a vein in the arm, hand or foot at the place where the anaesthetic cream (which numbs the skin) has been applied. It may then be necessary to wait before pictures are taken with a gamma camera.

Some scans are done as soon as the injection is given; others may be 2 or 3 hours later. The waiting time depends on the type of scan. If sedation is being used, the scan will not start until your child is asleep.

The scan is usually done with your child lying on a bed. Your child will not need to get undressed. You may stay close during the scan.

The 'Gamma camera' scanner may be very close during the scan, depending on the area being scanned. This picture shows how it may be set up.



Do I need to bring anything?

We suggest that your child brings a **favourite toy, DVD, tablet or book** as there can be a long wait between the injection and scan. This is to give the injection time to get to the area being scanned. They may also have these with them during the scan; we can show DVDs while the scan is being carried out.

Is the radiation dangerous?

No. The injection contains a small amount of radioactivity but this is short lived and any risk involved is very small. Your doctor would not consider asking us to carry out the scan unless it was believed that your child would benefit from the information gained.

The radioactivity your child receives remains in the body for a short time and is cleared from the body through natural bodily functions, as well as decaying away naturally. Encouraging your child to drink fluids will help remove the tracer more quickly.

The radioactivity will last for 24-48 hours (depending on the type of scan). **During this time gloves should be worn to change nappies; all nappies and any wet clothing or bedding should be put to one side.** After this time they can be washed or disposed of as normal.

What will happen to the results?

We aim to report examinations as soon as possible. The results will be sent to the Doctor who requested the scan to be done.

You will NOT be told the results of the examination at the time of the scan.

More information

All the staff would like to make your visit as pleasant as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Nuclear Medicine Department: 01392 402124

Changing the appointment

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please let us know as soon as possible on 01392 402124. We may then be able to offer this appointment to another patient. A further date and time will then be arranged for you.

Please be advised that if you fail to attend the appointment without notifying us, we may need to inform the referring doctor before making another appointment.

Please note: If your child, or anyone in the family have had D&V (diarrhoea and vomiting) you will need to contact us to rebook your appointment unless they have been clear for the past 48 hours.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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