

Nuclear Medicine Renogram

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact: Radiology Department

The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE
Nuclear Medicine, telephone 01904 725936

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About this leaflet

In this leaflet we tell you about the procedure known as a Nuclear Medicine renogram. We explain what is involved and what the possible risks are. The information in this leaflet is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor but can act as a starting point for such a discussion.

What is a renogram?

A renogram is a Nuclear Medicine imaging test that looks at your kidneys and bladder. It shows how well the kidneys clear waste products out of the bloodstream.

Are there any alternative procedures?

Nuclear Medicine scans use radioactive tracers to get information about tissues and organs that cannot be obtained using other scanning techniques. Your doctor has decided this test is the most appropriate for you.

How do we prepare for the scan?

There is no special preparation, but you will need to drink at least 1 litre of fluid an hour before the scan. You may go to the toilet, as a full bladder is not needed for the scan, and you can eat normally. You can bring a relative or friend with you, but they will have to wait in the waiting room while you have your scan. Please do not bring children or pregnant adults with you to your appointment.

If you are taking water tablets, please don't take them on the day of your scan.

What happens on arrival?

You will be asked to empty your bladder just before you go in for the scan. You will not be asked to remove your clothes for the scan, but you will be required to remove metal items such as belts, keys and coins. Buttons and zips are fine.

What happens during the scan?

The scan is done using a machine called a gamma camera. You will be asked to lie flat on your back on the scanning bed. A small cannula will be inserted into a vein, usually in your arm; this will be used to give you two injections. You will be moved into position in the scanner and then you will be given a small injection of a radioactive tracer into a vein in your arm. The tracer travels from your bloodstream into your kidneys and the gamma camera starts taking pictures immediately. You will need to lie very still for about 30 minutes while the pictures are taken.

Usually, a diuretic (furosemide) will be injected through the cannula 15 minutes into the scan (although sometimes the doctor likes us to give the furosemide 15 minutes before the radioactive tracer).

The diuretic makes your kidneys work harder and gives the doctors more information about your kidney function.

When the scan is finished, you will usually be asked to go to the toilet to empty your bladder again. We then take a 1-minute picture of your kidneys with you standing up with your back to the gamma camera.

What happens after the scan?

When the scan is finished you will be free to leave the department.

We recommend that you drink plenty of fluids for the rest of the day, as this helps your kidneys flush any remaining radioactive tracer out of your body. You will notice that the diuretic makes you need to use the toilet more frequently for a few hours after the scan.

Are there any risks or complications?

Nuclear Medicine procedures are very safe diagnostic imaging tests. Side effects from the injection are extremely rare and mild, for example a rash, itching and nausea or headache, and pass after 48 hours. Rarely, the furosemide can make you feel faint, or give you some blurred vision, so we recommend that you do not drive yourself home after your scan.

The amount of radioactivity involved is very small, and after 24 hours the radioactive tracer will have passed out of your body. There is radiation in the air and ground all around us called background radiation. Most radioisotope scans give on average the equivalent of a year's background radiation.

This examination is not recommended for pregnant women. If you believe you are, or might be pregnant, or if you are breastfeeding, please let us know before your appointment.

Further guidance has been published by Public Health England, visit website Exposure to ionising radiation from medical imaging: safety advice - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Results

You will not be given the results on the day of the scan. A report will be sent to the doctor who asked us to do the test. They will then get in touch with you regarding the results of the scan.

What if I have any other questions?

If you have any worries or questions about your scan, please feel free to telephone us on 01904 725936 and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Mrs J Hopkins, Radiology, The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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