

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Undergoing a white cell scan

We have been requested by your consultant to arrange a white cell scan.

This study is performed in our Nuclear Medicine department to identify sites of infection or inflammation.

The aim of this leaflet is to explain what you can expect when you come for your nuclear medicine scan.

What is nuclear medicine?

Nuclear medicine is a method of imaging the body using a gamma camera and using radiopharmaceuticals (radioactive 'dyes').

To look at the function of the body, nuclear medicine uses gamma rays. These are very similar to x-rays except gamma rays are produced by a radiopharmaceutical dye injected into the bloodstream.

The radiation dose is kept as low as possible, similar to an x-ray dose, which means it may take quite a long time to create the images.

What should I do if I cannot attend for the appointment?

Please inform us as soon as possible on 01623 622515, extension 3284 or 3205, if you are unable to attend. A special injection will be prepared for your scan, which cannot be used on any other patient.

Am I suitable for an isotope scan?

Most patients are suitable for an isotope scan. However, you must ring us on 01623 622515, extension 3284 or 3205 for advice if:

- You are pregnant
- There is any possibility that you may be pregnant
- You are breastfeeding
- You weigh over 30 stones (200 kilos).

How do I prepare for this scan?

There are no restrictions regarding eating or drinking.

If you are taking any medication, you may continue to take this as normal.

Please leave any valuables at home. You are responsible for all personal items you bring into hospital and the Trust cannot accept responsibility for their loss or damage.

What happens during the scan?

You will need to report to the reception desk in the main x-ray department, which is adjacent to the Emergency Department. From there you will be directed to the Nuclear Medicine department.

What happens on the day of the appointment?

A sample of blood will be taken from your arm.

The white cells will be re-injected approximately 90 minutes later.

The first scan will take place one hour after injection time.

You will be required to lie on the imaging couch while the scan takes place.

The gamma camera will be close to you, without touching, and you will never be totally enclosed.

The procedure may take up to 30 minutes. The scan will be repeated two hours after the injection time.

Occasionally a further scan will be required 4 hours after the injection.

You are free to leave the department between procedures. You will be given a time to return for the next part of the examination.

You can eat and drink normally at all times.

Please note these times are approximate and may vary depending on the cell labelling time.

Are there any risks to having an isotope scan?

The benefit from the isotope scan outweighs the small risk from radiation.

The scan results will allow your consultant to make the correct treatment decision for you.

To avoid babies and children being exposed to unnecessary radiation, it is good practice to avoid prolonged contact with them for at least 12 hours following the injection

Can I drive after my scan?

Yes, there is no restriction on driving after your scan.

How do I get the results?

When your scan is finished no instant diagnosis can be made. The images produced are recorded digitally and reviewed and a report sent to your referring clinician.

These results will be discussed with you by your referring clinician. If you have been referred from the hospital and have not received your follow-up appointment within four weeks please contact your consultant's patient coordinator.

If you have any concerns or require more information, please call 01623 622515, extension 3284 or 3205.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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