

## Nuclear Medicine

# DMSA Kidney scan

### What is this leaflet for?

This leaflet will help you get ready for your visit to the Nuclear Medicine Department. Please read the information and call us if you have any questions. We are happy to help.

### What is a DMSA kidney scan?

A DMSA scan (Dimercaptosuccinic acid) is a scan that checks how well your kidneys are working. The scan used a small amount of radioactive material. This helps doctors see if there are any problems or damage to the kidneys, like from infections. It can also help doctors check how well kidneys are working when there are other kidney problems.

### Please call us as soon as possible if:

- You have had a urinary tract infection in the last 3 months
- You are pregnant or think you might be pregnant
- You are breastfeeding
- You need any special help
- You will be using ambulance transport for your appointment, and it is after midday
- You don't live in your own private home, like a care home

**Telephone: 024 7696 8212**  
**Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm**



## Patient Information

### **How should you prepare?**

- You can take your medications as usual.
- You can eat as usual.
- You should drink plenty of fluids (non-alcoholic) before the test unless your doctor has told you to restrict your fluids.

**Please plan to be at your appointment for up to 5 hours.**

### **What will happen when you come for your scan?**

You will be asked to drink a few cups of water, so you are well hydrated. You don't need a full bladder for the scan, so you can go to the toilet if you need to.

Then you will be given a small injection into a vein in your arm or hand, containing the radioactive tracer. We will give you a time to come back for your scan, which will be 2 to 4 hours later. This gives the tracer enough time to reach your kidneys.

During the waiting time, you can either leave the department or stay in the waiting room, whichever you prefer. You can eat and drink as usual while you wait.

### **What happens when the pictures are taken?**

Before your scan, we will ask you to empty your bladder. You won't need to take off your clothes, but you will need to remove any metal items like braces, belts, or jewellery. For the scan, you will lie on a special scanning bed. A machine called a gamma camera will take pictures of your kidneys. The camera will get close to you and stay in place while it takes three pictures of your kidneys. The scan will take about 30 minutes.

### **What happens after the images are taken?**

You will wait for a few minutes while your images are checked. Once this is done, you can leave. We cannot give you the results right away. The doctor who asked for the scan usually gets the results in 10 working days.

## Patient Information

After the injection, try to avoid spending too much time close to small kids or pregnant people for the rest of the day. You can still care for them.

It is very unlikely that you will feel any side-effects after the scan, but if you do, please let us know.

### **How much radiation will you receive?**

This examination exposes you to ionising radiation. The amount of radiation is 0.7 mSv(millisievert). 0.7 mSv is about the same amount of natural radiation you get living in the UK for 110 days.

Your doctor has recommended this scan because the benefit outweighs the very low risk of harm. The risk of getting cancer because of this radiation is around 7 in 2000 people. This is very small compared with the 1 in 2 risk of someone getting cancer naturally in their lifetime.

### **Directions and car parking**

The Nuclear Medicine department is a short walk from the main entrance on the ground floor. When you enter the hospital through the main entrance, turn left to go into the West wing. Follow the signs for X-ray along the corridor, and you'll find X-ray on the left, just after the Fracture Clinic. Go to the X-ray reception and walk straight ahead. Follow signs for Nuclear Medicine. You will go through the double doors and enter the main reception area of the department.

There is parking available for patients and visitors, but spaces can be limited, so it is a good idea to arrive early. There is a charge for parking, and automatic number plate recognition systems are in use. For more details about directions, parking charges, and site maps, visit the trust website at ([www.uhcw.nhs.uk](http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk)).

### **Facilities available in the hospital**

- Chilled water dispenser in the department.
- Costa Coffee, M&S and WHSmith in the main reception area.
- Three hospital restaurants.

## Patient Information

### What if you still have questions?

If you have any questions or concerns, we're here to help. Call the person who referred you for this treatment or call Nuclear Medicine.

The Nuclear Medicine department is open:

**Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm.**

**Call: 024 7696 8212**

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 8212 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

### Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This will help us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.



Have your say. Scan the QR code or visit:

[www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback)

#### Document History

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