

Radiology Department – Nuclear Medicine

Gallium PET-CT Scan

We provide this information to help you prepare for your visit to the Nuclear Medicine Department.

What is a Gallium PET/CT Scan?

PET-CT (Positron Emission Tomography with Computerised Tomography) is a scanning method that allows us to detect abnormalities in the body. For this scan we will give you an injection containing a small amount of radioactivity called Gallium-68-DOTATATE. This helps us to identify if certain types of tumours are arising from the neuro-endocrine systems.

Important:

We require you to ring the department on receipt of this letter to confirm that you will be able to attend for your appointment. This will enable us to order the injection required for your test. Failure to confirm your appointment will result in your appointment being cancelled.

Contact us on:

Telephone: 02476 968212

Mon-Fri 08:00am-5:00pm

Please contact the Nuclear Medicine Department as soon as possible if:

- you are pregnant (or think you may be pregnant)
- you are breastfeeding
- you have any special needs

Patient information

- you will be using ambulance transport to attend your appointment and your appointment time is later than 12.30pm (so that we can offer you a morning appointment instead)
- your appointment is not convenient
- you require any further information about your scan

Please allow up to 3 hours for this procedure.

Preparation

Please let us know as soon as possible if you are on one of the following, as it will be necessary to schedule the scan to fit in with your injections:

- **monthly octreotide LAR (also known as Sandostatin LAR)**
- **monthly lanreotide (also known as Lanreotide Autogel) or**
- **short-acting octreotide injections (usually 2-3 times per day)**

You will be advised by staff about taking these medications and if you are required to stop any short acting injections.

You should continue to take all other medications as normal. There are no restrictions on what you can eat or drink prior to this scan.

Please leave all jewellery at home, as you will need to remove all metal for the scan. We suggest you wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothes without metal zips or fastenings so you don't have to change into a hospital gown.

Please allow plenty of time to get to your appointment, as the tracer is individually prepared for you and has a very short shelf life, so scans cannot normally be delayed. Your injection will be prepared for you once you have arrived in the department.

Please do not bring along anyone with you who is pregnant or under 18 years of age.

What will happen when I come to the department?

Our staff will fully explain the procedure to you when you arrive for your appointment.

Patient information

A cannula will be inserted in a vein, normally in your arm or hand (please make sure you are well hydrated).

You will then be required to wait whilst your injection is prepared for you. This preparation phase will take approximately 30-45 minutes.

After it has been prepared the Gallium injection will be administered through the cannula. You will then be asked to sit and relax quietly, alone, for approximately 45 minutes before having the scan. You can listen to music and read but will not be able to have anyone sitting with you during this time.

After your injection you will be asked to limit your contact with small children and pregnant individuals for the following 6 hours. We suggest that for this time you try to keep any time that you spend within arm's length of pregnant individuals, babies and small children as short as possible. However, there is no need to stop giving children essential care.

How much radiation will I receive?

For this scan it is necessary to inject a small amount of radioactive tracer. The small risk from this is outweighed by the information that will be gained by taking the scan. A doctor will have checked the request to ensure that this is the appropriate test for you.

What happens when the pictures are taken?

Before entering the scanning room, you will be asked to empty your bladder. The pictures are taken by a PET-CT scanner. You will lie on the bed and will be required to keep as still as possible, but you can breathe normally. The images will take 30 minutes to complete and the scanning bed will move through the scanner as it takes pictures of your body. A member of staff will be able to see you throughout the scan but will not be in the same room.

What happens after the scan?

You will be asked to wait for a few minutes whilst your images are processed and checked. You will be told when this is complete and when you can leave. We are **not** permitted to discuss the results with you. The doctor who requested the scan usually receives the results within 3-5 working days.

Patient information

Directions and Car Parking

The department is a short walk from the main entrance on the ground floor. To find the Nuclear Medicine Department enter the hospital through the main entrance and turn left on to the West wing. Follow the signs for X-ray along the corridor. Enter X-ray reception and continue ahead, following signs for Nuclear Medicine. The department is located through the double doors, where you will enter into the main reception area of the department.

Hospital car parking is available to all hospital patients and visitors. Spaces are limited so please allow plenty of time to locate a car parking space. A charge is payable. Further information including directions, parking charges and site maps are available on the trust website (www.uhcnw.nhs.uk).

Relatives and Escorts

You may wish to bring a friend or relative to accompany you for your investigation but please do not bring children or pregnant individuals with you. They may be useful if you do not speak English very well or if you have any special needs.

Facilities available in the hospital:

- Chilled water dispenser in the department.
- Costa coffee shop and WHSmith shop in the main reception foyer.
- Three hospital restaurants.

More information

All the staff would like to make your visit as pleasant as possible. If you have any concerns please talk to the person looking after you or contact us on the phone number provided.

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.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcnw.nhs.uk

Document History

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