

Nuclear Medicine

Iodine-123 thyroid scan

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 an iodine-123 thyroid scan?

A thyroid scan is a special test of the thyroid gland. It can be used to assess any unusual lumps in your thyroid or to measure how well your thyroid is working.

Please call the department when you get this letter to confirm you can attend. This lets us order the injection needed for your test. If you need to cancel your appointment, let us know as soon as possible. If you do not call to confirm, your appointment will be cancelled.

We will ask you for your name, hospital number, date of birth, weight, and appointment date and time.

This number is for confirming your appointment only:

Telephone: 024 7696 7191 Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

Please call us as soon as possible if:

- You are pregnant or think you may 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 have had a CT or X-ray scan within the last eight weeks where you were given an injection into a vein.

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



Patient Information

How should you prepare?

It is important you ring to confirm your appointment so we can order the materials for your scan. We will ask you for a list of any medication you are currently taking, please have this list ready when you ring the department. Some medications may need to be stopped for a short time before the scan. Staff will tell you if any changes are needed.

We also need to know if you have had a CT scan or X-ray in the last 8 weeks when you were given an injection into a vein.

Please do not take any cough mixtures or other medication that contains iodine from now until after the test. If unsure, please ask your pharmacist.

What will happen when you arrive?

This test is in two parts. When you arrive, you will be given a small injection into a vein in your arm or hand. The injection contains some radioactive medicine but will not make you feel any different and allows pictures to be taken. You will then be told when to return to the department, usually 4 hours later to have your scan. This delay is to allow the injection to be taken up by your thyroid.

After the injection, you can stay in the department or leave the hospital and return for your pictures later. You can eat and drink as usual.

It is important that you drink plenty during this time and use the toilet as needed. This helps to make the pictures clearer and helps remove some of the radiation from your body. Please let us know if you have any fluid restrictions when you arrive in the department.

After the injection, try to avoid spending too much time close to small children 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.

What happens when the pictures are taken?

You will be taken to a scanning room and asked to lie on the scanning bed. You won't have to take off your clothes, but you will need to remove anything made of metal around your neck and chest, like necklaces or large jewellery. A special camera called a gamma camera will then be positioned over your thyroid to take the pictures. The camera will get close to you, but you won't be enclosed. The scan will take around 20 to 30 minutes.

What happens after the pictures are taken?

After the scan, you will need to wait for a few minutes while your pictures are checked. We will tell you when this is complete, and you can leave. We cannot give you the results right away. The doctor who asked for the scan will usually get the results in 7 to 10 working days.

How much radiation will you receive?

This test exposes you to ionising radiation. The amount of radiation is 6.1mSv (millisievert). 6.1mSv is about the same amount of natural radiation you get living in the UK for about 2 years and 4 months.

Your doctor has recommended this scan because the benefit to you outweighs the very low risk of harm. The risk of getting cancer because of this radiation is around 1 in 3279 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 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; X-ray is located on the left-hand side just past the Fracture Clinic.

Enter X-ray reception and continue straight, following signs for Nuclear Medicine. The department is located through the double doors, where you will enter the main reception area of the department.

Hospital car parking is available for all patients and visitors. Spaces are limited, so please allow plenty of time to find a parking space. There is a charge for parking, and automatic number plate recognition systems are in use. For more information, including directions, parking charges, and site maps, visit the trust website (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.

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

Phone: 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

Document History

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