

## Nuclear Medicine

# Whole body bone scan

This leaflet will help you prepare 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 whole body bone scan?

A bone scan is a special test that helps doctors see how your bones are working. It uses a small amount of radioactive material to show how your bone cells break down and fix themselves. This is normal and helps keep your bones strong, but in some diseases, the changes in your bones are easier to spot on the scan. There are many reasons why these changes might show up on a bone scan.

### Please call us as soon as you can if:

- You are pregnant or think you might be pregnant
- You are breastfeeding
- You have additional needs
- You will be using ambulance transport for your appointment and your appointment time is after midday
- You don't live in your own private home (such as a care home)

**Telephone: 024 7696 8212**

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



## Patient information

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

You can eat, drink and take your medications as you usually do.

**Please plan to be at the appointment for up to 6 hours.**

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

The test starts with a small injection of radioactive material that helps us take pictures of your bones. This injection is slightly radioactive, it but will not make you feel any different. After the injection, you will need to wait for about 3 to 4 hours before we take the pictures. During this time, you can either stay or leave and come back later. It's important to drink lots of water and use the toilet as needed, as this helps 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. We will give you a time to return for the scan.

After you get the injection, try to keep time spent close to small children and pregnant people to as short as possible for the rest of the day. You can still take care of children and give them essential love and care.

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

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

Before the scan, you will need to go to the toilet to empty your bladder. You won't have to take off your clothes, but you will need to remove anything made of metal, like braces, belts, or large jewellery. You will lie down on a special bed, and a machine called a gamma camera will take pictures of you. The camera will get close to you, but you won't be enclosed. The bed you are lying on will slowly move so the camera can get pictures of all your bones. The scan will take about 20-30 minutes, and you will need to stay still during that time.

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

After the scan, you'll need to wait for a few minutes while we check your images. We will tell you when this is complete, and you can leave. We

## Patient information

cannot talk about the results right away. The Doctor who asked for the scan will usually get the results in 3 to 5 working days.

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

This test exposes you to ionising radiation. The amount of radiation is 2.9 mSv (millisievert). 2.9 mSv is about the same amount of natural radiation you get living in the UK for 1 year and 1 month.

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 person in 6897. This is very small compared with the 1 in 2 risk of someone getting cancer naturally in their lifetime.

### **Relatives and escorts**

You can bring a friend or relative with you to your appointment but please **do not** bring children or pregnant people with you.

### **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 foyer.

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- Three hospital restaurants.

### 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**

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



#### Document History

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