



Preparing for your HIDA Scan

What is a 'HIDA scan'?

In Nuclear Medicine we use an injection of a small amount of radioactive dye to show areas of your body that your doctor wishes to examine more closely. A 'HIDA' scan is a test, which helps to look at the liver and gallbladder in a different way to other scans (CAT scan or MRI).

What will your scan involve?

Firstly, when you arrive at the department you will be invited into the scan room and the test explained to you and any questions you have may be answered. You will be asked to lie on a bed and a special camera will be brought over your stomach. An injection is then given into one of the veins in your arm and the scan started immediately. It lasts for about 60 minutes and all you are asked to do is to remain still in the same position.

Occasionally, a delayed scan may be required and this could be up to about 3 hours after the initial scan, so although only rarely required allowance should be made to be in the hospital for up to 4 hours.

Is there any preparation before this scan?

You must fast for this scan and are therefore asked to skip breakfast the morning of the scan, except for small amounts of fluids.

What about after the scan?

After the scan you will be well enough to go home or back to work.

It is recommended that you minimise the time you spend in close contact (within 2 meters) with small children and pregnant women for the 6 hours following the injection, to avoid unnecessarily exposing them to very small amounts of radiation.

Please do not bring small children to the department with you, however, you are quite welcome to bring an adult companion to the department as long as they are definitely not pregnant or trying for a baby.

How much radiation will I get?

Firstly, it is very important to know that you will only receive a very small amount of radiation. We are all exposed to natural background radiation during our lives. The radiation dose from this scan is similar to that which you would receive from the environment over a period of 1 year. The benefits to you having this scan outweigh any possible radiation risks.

Do I need to bring anything with me?

Don't forget to bring your appointment card if your doctor gave you one. Although every effort is made to keep to the appointed times, unforeseeable events may cause delays and therefore a magazine/book may be useful.



Mater Misericordiae University Hospital

How soon will I get the results?

A doctor in Nuclear Medicine analyses your scan and writes a report, which is then sent to your doctor. Your doctor should then have the results within the next 7-10 days or else at the time of your next appointment.

When you come for your scan you will first need to go to the X-ray department.

LADIES

It is very important that we avoid carrying out this examination if you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant. If this is the case, please contact us in advance. When you arrive for your scan you will be asked for the date of the first day of your last period. If your period is overdue, your appointment date may be re-arranged.