



FACT SHEET

Nuclear Medicine Bone Scan

This fact sheet tells you what a Nuclear Medicine Bone scan is, and what is involved. Please read this sheet before having your scan. If you have any questions, ask your doctor or call the department.

What is a Bone Scan?

This is a Nuclear medicine procedure, used to evaluate the distribution of active bone formation in patients with: Neoplastic disease, Trauma, Arthritis, Infection (Osteomyelitis), monitoring effects of therapy, evaluation of osteonecrosis, soft tissue calcification, Paget's disease, and skeletal pain of unknown cause. This is done by injecting a small amount of a radiopharmaceutical (radioactive tracer) into a vein in your arm. A special camera (called a gamma camera) is used to track the radiotracer and take pictures of your bones.

What is involved?

There is no special preparation for this scan however, you are requested to be well hydrated.

When you arrive for your scan, you will be seen by a nuclear medicine doctor.

Depending on your clinical indication, a small amount of radioactive tracer will be injected in your arm while you lie under the gamma camera. This usually takes about 15 minutes where we look at the blood flow and collection to the area of concern (initial images) and you will be asked to return within 4 hours for further images (delayed images). In certain clinical indications, we may not take any initial images and request you to return for your delayed images. This will be explained to you

by the doctor and at the time of the injection. You can leave the department between the two images and there is no fasting required.

The test can take up to 5 hours.

What happens after the scan?

After your scan, a nuclear medicine physician will assess the pictures and then send the results to your referring doctor. You should not have any problems after the test and can resume normal activities including driving. You will be asked to avoid close contact with children and pregnant women for a few hours after the test.

Are there any risks or side effects?

All nuclear medicine tests involve exposure to radiation. The amount of radiation is very small, and the risks of side effects are very low. Allergic reactions are very rare and almost always mild.

When will my doctor receive the results?

The report will be faxed to your referring doctors within 48 hours of your appointment and a hard copy of the images and the report will be posted out if requested by the referrer.

For more information

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Nuclear Medicine or your test, please call the department on : (02) 8382 1830 or alternatively you can email on: svhs.nm@svha.org.au