

Your Kidney Scan explained (NDMSA)

Please read this patient information carefully as it contains information on preparing for the scan

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Aim of the patient information

This patient information is for patients having a DMSA Kidney Scan. It aims to tell you what a DMSA Kidney Scan is and what will happen.

General information

A doctor has asked that we take some pictures of your kidneys.

If the appointment clashes with another outpatient appointment or test, or you are unable to attend on this day, please contact this department as soon as possible. We can then reschedule the test and assign the appointment to another patient.

As the test involves small amounts of radiation, we ask that you are **not** accompanied by children under 18 or anyone who may be pregnant. You may bring one adult with you to the department.

If you have mobility issues, are incontinent or claustrophobic please contact the department on the number provided.

Benefit and risks of the test

Everyone receives some radiation every day from the radioactivity in the air, food we eat and even from space. The amount of radiation in a nuclear medicine test is similar to your natural exposure over one year so the risks associated with it are low.

The main benefit of the test is making the correct diagnosis, so you can get the treatment that is right for you. This benefit is far greater than the small risk from radiation.

What does the test involve?

Part 1

The test involves giving a small injection of a radioactive tracer into one of the veins in your hands or arms. There should be no ill effects from the injection. A 3-hour delay is then necessary to allow the injection time to get to your kidneys. During this time you will be free to leave the hospital if you wish.

Part 2

A number of pictures are then taken with a Gamma Camera (see photos). To avoid any blurring of the pictures it is necessary for you to lie as still as possible for about 30 minutes. Each picture will take between 5 to 8 minutes. You are then free to leave the department.

Preparation

If you have had a urinary tract infection in the three months prior to the test, please let us know as soon as possible as the accuracy of the test may be affected.

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding you must inform the department as quickly as possible as special arrangements may have to be made.

There is no special preparation required for this test. **Please eat and drink as normal.** Please bring with you a list of any medication that you are on (your repeat prescription sheet if possible).

After the test

For the rest of the day, you must take extra care to wash your hands thoroughly after toilet use, sit down when you use the toilet and to flush the toilet twice. You must also continue to drink extra fluids and empty your bladder frequently. This will improve the clearance of the radiation from your body.

When the test is completed, the images will be reviewed and a report will be available to the doctor who has requested the test.

The camera

The Gamma Camera that takes the pictures has an open design and the majority of patients complete the test without any discomfort.



Department of Nuclear Medicine

Lincoln County Hospital 01522 573103

Grantham Hospital 01476 464777

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