

Having a thyroid scan (with Tc-99m)

Department of Nuclear Medicine

Information for Patients

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What is a thyroid scan with Tc-99m?

This is a simple procedure that uses a small amount of radioactivity to take images of your thyroid. Technetium 99m (Tc-99m) is the name of the radioactive substance that is used for the test.

If you cannot attend your appointment please call 0116 258 5627. You must cancel at least 3 days before so we can offer your appointment to someone else.

Leicester Royal Infirmary: Level 0, Sandringham Building (behind the multi-storey car park).

Glenfield Hospital: please use the East Entrance.

You must tell us if:

- you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant, or have just missed a period.
- you are breastfeeding. This is because radioactive substances can come out in breast milk. We may advise you to stop breastfeeding for a short time.
- you have problems holding your pee (incontinence). This is because radioactive substances will be in your pee. You may need special instructions because of this.
- you have problems with your memory or learning difficulties.
- you need an interpreter. Please tell us you need an interpreter at least 3 days before your appointment.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

How do I prepare for the scan?

We will need to know what medication you are taking up to 6 weeks before your appointment. This is because some of your medication can stop the radioactive injection working in your thyroid. Your doctor may ask you to stop taking this medication when they request this test.

For 3 weeks before the test:

- **Do not take** any cough medicines, multivitamins or cod liver oil.

For 1 week before the test, try to eat a low iodine diet:

- **Do not eat** fish, seaweed (such as kelp), seafood or iodised (sea) salt.
- **Do not eat** glacé or maraschino cherries or products containing the colouring material E127 (this is a red food colouring).
- Try to eat less of dairy produce such as eggs, cheese, milk and milk products. All these contain some iodine.
- Here is a list of low in iodine and suitable to eat as part of a low iodine diet foods: fresh meat, vegetables, fresh fruit, pasta, rice.
- Please note that the iodine content of food is different around the world. **You should not** follow low iodine diets from other countries. Low iodine diets found on the internet are often from outside of the UK and can show different information.
- Please see the leaflet "The low iodine diet" for more guidance and meal suggestions.

On the day of your test:

- Make sure you drink plenty of water before coming to your appointment.

What happens during the scan?

1. We will explain the test to you. You can ask questions.
2. You will not need to undress. A member of staff will be with you throughout the scan.
3. We will then inject a small amount of radioactive tracer into a vein in your arm. This is no more painful than a blood test.
4. We will wait for 10 minutes while your thyroid absorbs the injection.
5. After this we will take you to the camera room. You will lie on a couch while we take pictures of your thyroid. This takes about 15 to 20 minutes. You must keep still during this time.

What happens after the scan?

You will be radioactive after you have had your injection for the next 24 hours. To minimise any risk to yourself and others, you must:

- drink plenty of extra fluids.
- flush the toilet well after use. Men should sit down when going for a pee.
- wash your hands thoroughly each time you use the toilet.
- you can usually go back to work without any problem. Please ask staff for advice if you work with radiation or in the photographic industry.

Are there any risks?

It is very unlikely that you will have any side effects from the radioactive injection. There is a small risk associated with the radiation you receive by having this scan.

Ionising radiation can cause cell damage that may, after many years or decades, turn cancerous. We are all at risk of developing cancer during our lifetime. The normal risk is that this will happen to about 50% of people at some point in their life.

The dose of radiation you will get from this test is very small. It is the same dose you would get from the environment in about 6 months. Having this test will add only a very small chance of this happening to you. In fact, the risks from missing a serious disorder by not having this test may be considerably greater.

How will I get my results?

Your scan will be looked at by a radiologist and the results will be passed onto your doctor.

We will talk with about your results at your next outpatient appointment.

Useful information for your appointment

Friends and relatives will not be allowed into the room during the procedure, unless we need their assistance.

Please do not bring children with you to your appointment. Radiation is more hazardous for children and pregnant women than for adults. Please do not to bring them into the Nuclear Medicine Department unless they are coming for a scan.

If you need hospital transport, please see our website: www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk

Contact details

For specific information about your test, please call:

Leicester Royal Infirmary: 0116 258 5627

Glenfield Hospital: 0116 258 3850

Leicester Radiopharmacy Service: 0116 258 5579

The answering machine is checked during office hours.

If you have a question about your medical condition please contact your GP or the doctor who made your referral.

More information

Useful websites:

- www.bnms.org.uk
- www.radiologyinfo.org
- www.patient.co.uk

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

જે તુમીં ઇંચ જાણવાની વિમે હેર જામા વિંચ જાહુંદે હે, ઝાં વિરખા વરકે હેઠાં હિંઝે ગણે નંબર 'ਤੇ ટૈલીફોન વરો।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk