



A lifetime of specialist care

Your nuclear medicine GI bleed scan – appointment information

Points to remember

- Please telephone us on 01895 828 880 as soon as you receive this letter if you need to cancel or change the appointment date of your scan.
- You should be able to have a light breakfast two hours before the test. You will have been given advice about this when your appointment was booked.

What is nuclear medicine?

Nuclear medicine is a special way of taking images of your body. It uses a small amount of radioactivity to highlight the part of the body we need to see in more detail.

About your GI bleed scan

This scan will show the location, frequency and extent of any bleeding within the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. The GI tract is part of your body's digestive system and is mostly located in the abdomen.

We will give you two injections on the day of your test. The first injection uses a substance to label (tag) your red blood cells for the test. The second injection will be given to you 20 minutes later. This contains a tracer (chemical) with a small amount of radioactive material that will detect and locate any bleeding within the GI tract.

We will ask you to lie on a scanning bed while the camera takes images of your gastrointestinal tract. This takes about two hours and it is important that you keep still as much as possible during this time. If more images are needed the scan will take an extra hour. There is a possibility that you will be asked to come back the following day too.

How long will the appointment take?

You will be with us for about three and a half hours on day one and around one and a half hours on the following day if needed.

Is there any risk from the radiation?

The amount of radiation used is small and kept to a minimum. We believe that the benefits of having the test far outweigh any risks. To avoid exposing children unnecessarily to radiation, please do not bring them with you to the department. Please ask if you have any questions.

Female patients

You should not have this scan if you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant, or are breastfeeding.

Diabetics

You do not need to change your diet or treatment. Please bring your insulin and any snacks as needed.

Are there any side effects?

The substance we give you does not have any side effects. It will not make you sleepy or stop you from driving a car.

After your scan

You can eat and drink as usual and continue with your normal daily activities after your scan. You may go anywhere you like, but please try to avoid long periods of close contact with children for the next 24 hours. This is to avoid exposing them to unnecessary radiation.

Results

We will send the results of your scan to the hospital consultant who asked for the test.

Additional information

Please note that our nuclear medicine department scans many people every day. We try to keep to your appointment time as closely as possible, but should you be late, or if there is an emergency at the hospital, it may not be possible to perform your scan immediately.

Hospital transport

If you need hospital transport to get to us, please ask your GP to arrange this.

Private patients

If you are a private patient please bring your private insurance details to your appointment, otherwise, please pay your invoice on the day of your scan.

How to find us

The nuclear medicine department is in the ANZAC Centre, ground floor, Harefield Hospital.

Useful contacts

If you have any questions about your scan, please call us on 01895 828 880, Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm.

If you need help or advice about any service or department at our hospitals, and feel unable to talk to those people responsible for your care, call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 020 7349 7715 or email pals@rbht.nhs.uk. This is a confidential service.