

Information about your

# Nuclear Medicine Test

You can find more information on Nuclear Medicine services on our webpage:

🌐 <https://www.nhsggc.scot/hospitals-services/services-a-to-z/nuclear-medicine/>

or scan the QR code below:



## **What is a Nuclear Medicine test?**

We use Nuclear Medicine tests to make a diagnosis or monitor the progress of treatment and this involves the use of radiation. We make sure that the benefits from making the right diagnosis or providing the correct treatment outweigh the low risk involved with the radiation itself.

## **Do I need to do anything right away?**

Yes. If you are pregnant (or think you may be pregnant), please phone us now. Also, please phone and tell us if you are breast feeding.

If you are responsible for looking after small children, or have small children at home, please contact our staff for advice.

Please let us know if you have urinary incontinence.

## **Help with Specific Needs**



If you need help with any of the following please telephone the department.

- Sight, hearing or require an interpreter
- Mobility, specialised equipment or any other need

## **What does this involve?**

We give you a small amount of radioactivity (radiation). We may inject this or we may give you the radiation in a drink, food or in a gas. You may then have to wait before pictures or samples are taken, to allow the radiation to reach the body part your doctor is interested in.

If your appointment letter tells you that there is more than one hour to wait, you may be able to leave the department during this time.

If we need pictures we will use a Gamma Camera. Depending on the test, we will either ask you to lie on a bed, sit or stand next to the camera.

The person operating the camera will fully explain the scan at the time.



**Gamma Camera**

Some gamma cameras also have a CT scanner attached, the staff may use this to take extra pictures to provide more detailed information to the doctor. Although we make every effort to meet our appointment times, delays may occur. We will let you know if this is the case.

## **What to wear**

Usually, you do not need to remove any clothing, however we will ask you to remove metal objects, such as belts or items of jewellery. We advise you to wear loose fitting clothes with no metal fastenings. If you use incontinence pads please bring spare pads with you. After the test you can go home.

## **Do I need to prepare for the test?**

Your appointment letter and information sheet will detail any preparation you need before your test e.g. if you can eat or not.

## **Pregnancy Checks**

As our tests use radiation we do not routinely carry out scans on patients that are pregnant (the exception to this are lung scans performed during pregnancy).

Therefore, we will ask all patients aged 12-55 years that were registered as female at birth about their pregnancy status.

If a pregnancy status cannot be confirmed (e.g. you have irregular periods or your period is late) we may ask you to take a pregnancy test, or reschedule your test until pregnancy status can be confirmed. These steps are to ensure the safety of the unborn foetus.

## **Can I return to work after my test?**

There is usually no problem, but if your work involves radiation, or working with pregnant colleagues, children or babies please ask our staff for advice.

## **If I am taking tablets or other medication, do I need to stop?**

For most tests there is no need to change any regular treatment. If you do need to stop taking any medication, your letter and information sheet will tell you. Please bring a note of your medication with you.

## **Will it hurt?**

No. If the radioactivity is being injected only the injection needle may hurt a bit. This is much the same as having a blood test. You will not feel any ill effects from the injection. It does not make you sleepy. Most nuclear medicine tests do not prevent you from driving a car, unless your appointment letter tells you otherwise.

## **Do I need to do anything after the test?**

After your test you will still have some radiation in your body. This will naturally decay away. Avoid close contact with children or people who are pregnant for the rest of the day of your test (if the restriction time is longer, this will be included in your information sheet). Please contact us if you have any questions about this.

You can eat and drink as normal. We may ask you to drink more than usual for the rest of the day. This is to help remove the radioactivity from your body. The rest will disappear naturally

## **What happens to the results of the test?**

We will send a report to the hospital consultant or GP who asked us to do the test.

## **Can I bring a friend or relative?**

Yes, however **please do not bring children and people who are pregnant with you.**

Your friend or relative will have to wait in a separate room while you have your test.

## **Radiation Risks – putting it in perspective**

We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives. By having this nuclear medicine test you will receive a small amount of radiation in addition to the natural background radiation you already receive. This test carries a low risk from radiation.

It is equivalent to what you might be exposed to naturally over 1-4 years, depending on your test. If you would like more information about the radiation you will receive from this test please ask a member of staff when you attend your appointment.

## **If you receive care or support at home**

Please share this information leaflet with people who will be involved in your care at home in the hours following your test. For example your relatives, friends, a nurse or carer visiting your home. As you are receiving a small amount of radiation your carer will also receive some radiation exposure from you and you should make them aware of this. Where possible your carer should observe good hygiene, for example washing their hands before and after carrying out caring duties such as toileting. Your carer should try and minimise close contact with you for the rest of the day, (if the restriction time is longer, this will be included in your test specific patient information leaflet). If they follow the advice there is a very low risk to them and is equal to what they might be exposed to naturally over a few hours to a few weeks, depending on your test.

If you need more information, please ask a member of staff when you attend for your appointment, or telephone the department before you come for your test.

## **If you live in a Care or Nursing Home**

The Care Home or Nursing staff should read the following section.

### **Care or Nursing Home Staff**

As your resident is coming for a Nuclear Medicine test there are some responsibilities for the Care or Nursing home.

At their appointment your resident will receive a small amount of radiation to perform their test. We will issue instructions when the patient attends. These instructions are specific to the test they are having and state the additional precautions to be taken and the duration of these (usually a few days). Staff nursing or caring for a patient at the Care or Nursing Home should be aware of, and follow, these instructions when caring for them at this time. If you need more information please telephone the department.

## **Radiation detectors at airports and ports**

If you are planning on travelling in the near future, please ask a member of staff for information. Some airports or ports may now have sensitive radiation detectors. It is possible that they may be set off by a person who has recently had a Nuclear Medicine test.

## **Any more questions?**

The staff in the department want your visit to be as pleasant as possible. If you have any other questions, please ask the staff in Nuclear Medicine. You can telephone, or ask us before your test starts. The telephone number is on your appointment letter.

## **Our standards**

Our Technologists and Medical Physics staff regularly maintain and check our equipment. These checks make sure the amount of radiation we use is kept as low as possible to get the pictures or information we need.

## **Travel to hospital by patient transport (ambulance or ambulance car)**

A hospital or clinic appointment does not mean that you qualify for patient transport. If for medical reasons, you need this form of transport, you or your carer should arrange this. Please call the Scottish Ambulance Service on ☎ **0300 123 1236** at least 3 days before your appointment but no sooner than 30 days in advance. They will ask you a series of assessment questions to determine your need. Please tell the transport service how long your appointment will last, (this is on your appointment letter), if you don't there may be no ambulance available to take you home.

Lines are open 8:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday to Friday and 8:00am to 1:00pm on Saturday.

If you no longer need the ambulance or car please call the cancellation number on ☎ **0800 389 1333** as soon as possible before your appointment date and tell them your name, address, phone number, date of appointment and hospital clinic you are attending. Please also call the Nuclear Medicine department to cancel your appointment if you no longer need it.

Please note they will only transport your escort or companion if absolutely necessary for your medical need.

## **Travel costs**

Patients can claim their travel costs if they receive Family Credit, Income Support or are on a Low Income. Please ask staff for further information or directions to the cashiers office.

Please note:

- Patients must bring proof of entitlement e.g. a letter confirming entitlement to benefit, HC2 certificate, NHS Tax Credit Exemption Card, Asylum Registration Card (ARC).
- Bus or rail tickets will be required as evidence.
- We can reimburse the cost of petrol for patients using their car.
- In some cases the travelling costs of an escort can be claimed.
- Taxi fares will not be reimbursed.

All patients travelling from the Highlands and Islands are entitled to claim some or all of their public transport costs of travel.



## Parking

Car parking is free, but there is a four hour maximum stay in operation Monday to Friday (from 7:30am to 4:00pm). Please allow time to find a car parking space.

Disabled parking spaces are available in the main car parks.

## Public transport

For transport information (including timetables, journey planners and routes) visit  [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com) or call  **0871 200 2233**


For more travel information please visit  [www.nhsggc.org.uk/patients-and-visitors/transport-travel-parking/](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk/patients-and-visitors/transport-travel-parking/)

## Use of your images

We may use images or details from your test for research, teaching or presentation purposes to improve our service. You will not be able to be identified from this information. Please let us know if you do not wish your data used in this way.

## Comments and suggestions

We welcome comments and suggestions about any aspect of your attendance at the hospital.

Please speak with a member of staff or you can use our online feedback system,  [www.nhsggc.org.uk/get-in-touch-get-involved/patient-feedback](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk/get-in-touch-get-involved/patient-feedback)

You can also comment on Care Opinion:

 [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk)

## Complaints

If you wish to complain then in the first instance speak with a senior member of staff. You can ask for a guidance leaflet which is available from all clinics. You can also contact the Complaints Office on: ☎ **0141 201 4500** or ✉ **complaints@ggc.scot.nhs.uk**



