

*Better  
Together*

# Patient information

## Parathyroid Scan

Department of Nuclear Medicine

## **What is a parathyroid scan?**

This is a simple imaging procedure, which enables us to take pictures of your parathyroid glands, which lie in the front of your neck. This involves an injection of a small amount of radioactive solution into a vein in your arm, followed by pictures taken with a special camera called a Gamma Camera.

## **What are the benefits of a parathyroid scan?**

This examination is important in the accurate diagnosis of your condition so that you can receive the correct treatment

## **What are the risks of this procedure?**

People often worry about tests or treatments that involve the use of radioactive materials. We tend to forget that we are all exposed to background radiation every day.

Please remember that the amount of extra radiation from your test is small. The benefit to you of providing your doctor with useful information about your health far outweighs any risk related to this radiation.

## **Are there any alternative diagnostic tests available?**

While there may be alternative diagnostic tests, your doctor has considered your particular case and has decided that this is the most appropriate test at this time.

## **What will happen if I decide not to have this test?**

It is your decision whether or not to proceed with the scan. However if you do not your doctor may not be able to find out what is wrong and may not be able to plan the appropriate treatment for you.

## **Female patients**

Where possible, we try to avoid using radioactive materials in patients who are, or may be pregnant. Therefore, please contact the department on Tel: 0151 706 4464 if you are:

- pregnant
- breastfeeding
- you think you could be pregnant
- your appointment is more than ten days from the start of your last period.

**If you are worried and have any questions, please speak to your doctor or a member of their team.**

## **Getting ready for your parathyroid scan**

- There is no preparation for this test.
- You will not normally need to undress, but we advise you to wear something comfortable and as little jewellery as possible.

## **Your parathyroid scan**

- You will have an injection of radioactive liquid into a vein in your arm.
- Pictures will then be taken using the Gamma camera and computer. This lasts about ten minutes.
- Following this you will be asked to wait for two hours. During this time you will be given lunch and some lemon juice to drink.

- Further pictures will be taken. These will last about 30 minutes.

This test **should not** make you feel unwell. Usually there are no ill effects from the injection. It will not make you sleepy nor will it prevent you from driving. It is rare for it to cause an allergic reaction, even in people who are susceptible to allergies.

### **After your scan**

You should carry this letter with you if you are travelling through train stations, airports and seaports. These areas may have very sensitive radiation detectors in place that can detect extremely small quantities of radiation. It is just possible that, until the radioactivity from this test has completely left your body, you may trigger one of these detectors. In the unlikely event that this occurs, there is no reason to be concerned.

Customs officials who operate these types of detectors are experienced in understanding what the detector has picked up, and after asking you a few simple questions and conducting a brief non-intrusive examination with a hand held detector, will let you pass on your way as soon as possible.

Different countries have different procedures and some may wish to see your appointment letter as part of this process.

**If you are planning to travel in the next month it is recommended that you carry this letter with you.**

### **Results**

Your results will be available at your next clinic appointment.

## **Cancellations**

If you are unable to keep this appointment, please let us know as soon as possible and we will arrange another for you.

## **Facilities in the department**

- We have a comfortable waiting room with T.V. and reclining chairs for patients who need them.
- Lunch and refreshments will be provided for you at appropriate times.

## **The Nuclear Medicine Team**

The Nuclear Medicine Department is staffed by specialist personnel who are trained and experienced in diagnostic and therapeutic procedures using radioactive materials.

The doctors are specialists in the field of Nuclear Medicine; highly trained physicists and radiographers produce the pictures and computer measurements; skilled nurses will care for you during your stay and, of course, efficient medical secretaries ensure that your results get to the right place in good time.

## **The Gamma Camera**

- This is a special camera, which allows us to take pictures of the radioactivity in your body. The camera will be linked to a computer to enable us to make measurements as well as take pictures.
- The camera may either be stationary or may move around you while the pictures are being taken. A member of staff will be in the camera room with you.

- Some of our tests do not require pictures to be taken.

## **Location**

The Royal Liverpool University Hospital is situated on the edge of the city centre. Please come directly to the Department of Nuclear Medicine, which is situated on the ground floor and is clearly sign-posted from each entrance.

## **Transport**

The Royal Liverpool Hospital is well served by public transport. Patients and visitors who are able to do so may wish to consider using public transport. For details of routes, services and times please contact the Merseytravel line on Tel: 0151 236 7676.

Parking for patients and visitors is available at the Q-park multi-storey car park. It is located almost opposite the main hospital entrance. The entrance by car is on Epworth Street off Erskine Street.

The car park is open 24 hours a day seven days a week.

Please take your ticket with you when you leave your car. Payment is made when you return to your car at the machines within the car park. Your ticket is inserted into the exit barrier as you leave the car park. The car park is continually monitored by parking hosts and CCTV.

There are ten spaces for the disabled on the entry level of the car park. If you need help, please speak with the parking hosts at the car park entrance.

If you normally require an ambulance when you attend hospital please contact the your family doctor (GP) as soon as possible.

## Further information

**If you have any further questions, or require further information, please contact:**

**Department of Nuclear Medicine**

**Tel 0151 706 4464**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 4464**

**Author: Nuclear Medicine/ Imaging Department**

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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