

Parathyroid Scan

PATIENT INFORMATION - What You Need to Know

DESCRIPTION OF EXAM

A parathyroid scan is a Nuclear Medicine imaging procedure that allows a radiologist to determine the function and health of the parathyroid gland

PREPARING FOR YOUR EXAM - What to do before your exam:

Patient should have nothing to eat or drink prior to coming in for the scan. Patient should not be on any thyroid medications for 1 month, and cannot have any IV contrast dye for 1 month prior to the exam. Patient should not be pregnant. If patient is breastfeeding please notify technologist at the time of exam. Wear comfortable clothing and avoid wearing jewelry and metallic objects in the area that will be examined. Arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled exam time to allow for registration.

DURING THE EXAM

Patient comes to the nuclear medicine department in the morning and is given 3 radioactive capsules to swallow. The patient then returns about 4 hours later for a radioactive injection and then 20 mins later for the first set of images. The first set of images consists of 4-5 images where a cone shaped camera will come in very close to your neck. The first set of images takes about 30 mins. The patient will typically (but not always) receive the second set of images that consist of a SPECT/CT where the camera rotates in a circular motion around the patient's neck for about a half hour. Then the patient will move into a tube like enclosure for a 2 minute CT scan. It is very important to lie still during the SPECT/CT portion of the exam. Typically (but not always) the patient is asked to return an hour later to repeat the same 4-5 images where a cone shaped camera will come in very close to your neck. The third set of images takes about 30mins. The duration of the whole exam usually takes about 6.5 hours, including a 4 hour break between the two injections.

AFTER YOUR EXAM

Drink plenty of fluids after your exam to help wash out the radioactive tracer from the body more quickly. There are no side effects from the radioactive tracer. The amount of radioactivity you receive is very small amount and is not harmful to you or anyone else. If breastfeeding, it is recommended to pump milk and discard for 4 days after exam.