

PATIENT INFORMATION

Nuclear Medicine

What is Nuclear Medicine?

Nuclear Medicine is the process of small amounts of radiation that are injected, inhaled or ingested to target a specific organ and demonstrate its function on a molecular level. Nuclear Medicine can differ to other radiological procedures as it can often identify physiological changes and progression of disease before anatomical changes occur.

What is Nuclear Medicine Technologist?

A Nuclear Medicine Technologist is a specifically trained healthcare professional in the field of Nuclear Medicine. The technologist looking after you will give you your injection, perform your scan and process your images to show the specialist Doctor.

Is Nuclear Medicine safe?

Nuclear Medicine has been a medical profession for over 60 years and to date there are no studies showing long term effects of low dose exposure from diagnostic Nuclear Medicine imaging. Queensland state and Australian legislation ensure all administered doses are of a safe level to patients and the public.

In most Nuclear Medicine procedures the injection administered, will decay away and will be excreted via the urinary system over the following 4-48 hours after your injection.

Is the Nuclear Medicine procedure painful?

Depending on the type of procedure you are having, you may be required to have an injection through a small needle or cannula. This may sting for a short moment, but no more than a blood test.

The scan is not painful at all. In most scans, you are required to lie on the bed and relax whilst the camera is imaging your body.

Can I be around children and pregnant women?

Yes you can be around children and pregnant women, however we do advise to minimise your time with them and maximise your distance where possible. As you will be injected with a small amount of radioactivity for your medical benefit, it is in their best interest not to be unnecessarily exposed, as a foetus and young children are more radiosensitive than you.

What if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

Due to the known side effects of radiation to an unborn foetus, and the necessity to administered small amounts of radiation to perform the scan, in most cases we do not perform nuclear medicine procedures on pregnant women, unless a medical benefit outweighs any potential harm to the foetus. This will be discussed between the Nuclear Medicine Radiologist and your referring Doctor. If you are pregnant or suspect you are pregnant, please advise your Doctor and the technologist.