INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Undergoing an isotope bone marrow scan

Introduction
We have been requested by your hospital doctor to arrange an isotope bone marrow scan. This study is performed in our Nuclear Medicine Department and enables us to identify many different bone marrow problems.

The aim of this leaflet is to explain what you can expect when you come for your isotope bone marrow scan.

What is nuclear medicine?
Nuclear medicine is a method of imaging the body using a gamma camera and using radiopharmaceuticals (radioactive ‘dyes’).

To look at the function of the body nuclear medicine uses gamma rays. These are very similar to x-rays except gamma rays are produced by a radiopharmaceutical dye injected into the bloodstream.

The radiation dose is kept as low as possible, similar to an x-ray dose, which means that it may take quite a long time to create the images.

What should I do if I cannot attend for the appointment?
Please inform us as soon as possible on 01623 622515, ext 3284 or 3205, if you are unable to attend. A special injection will be prepared for your scan which cannot be used on any other patient.

Am I suitable for an isotope scan?
Most patients are suitable for an isotope scan. However, you must ring us on 01623 622515, ext 3284 or 3205 for advice if:

- You are pregnant
- There is any possibility that you may be pregnant
- You are breastfeeding
- You weigh over 30 stones (200 kilos).

How do I prepare for this scan?
There are no restrictions regarding eating or drinking. If you are taking any medication, you may continue to take this as normal.

You will be asked if you would like to listen to music throughout your scan - you may bring your own CD if you wish.

What happens during the scan?
You should report to the reception desk in the original X-ray Department adjacent to the Emergency Department. You will be directed to the Nuclear Medicine Department.

- You will be given an injection into your arm and then you will be free to leave the department for an hour
- You may eat and drink as normal
On your return, you will be required to lie on the imaging couch while the scan takes place.

- The gamma camera will be close to you, without touching, but you will never be totally enclosed.
- Please allow about an hour and a half for the scan.

Are there any risks to having an isotope scan?
The benefit from the isotope scan outweighs the small risk from radiation. The scan results will allow your consultant to make the correct treatment decision for you.

To avoid babies and children being exposed to unnecessary radiation, it is advisable to avoid prolonged contact with them for at least 12 hours following the injection.

Can I drive after my scan?
Yes, there is no restriction on driving after your scan.

How do I get the results?
All the images produced are reviewed by a consultant radiologist who is a doctor specialising in reporting this type of scan. You will then be sent an appointment to see your hospital doctor to discuss the results when they are available.

Contact details
If you have any concerns or require more information, please call 01623 622515, ext 3284 or 3205.

Useful website
You may also like to read http://www.goingfora.com/radiology/