INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Undergoing a SeHCAT scan
This examination has two appointments, one week apart

Introduction
We have been requested by your hospital doctor to arrange an isotope scan. This study is performed in our Nuclear Medicine Department and enables us to identify problems of bile salt malabsorption which may cause abdominal problems. This is a two part examination that requires two separate appointments, one week apart.

The aim of this leaflet is to explain what you can expect when you come for your isotope 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 capsule which is swallowed.

The radiation dose is kept as low as possible, similar to an x-ray dose, which means 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. The special capsule 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 an isotope 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.
Part 1
- You will be given a capsule to swallow with a drink and then you will be free to leave the department for an hour
- We would like you to eat and drink normally during this time
- The first scan will take place on your return
- You will be required to stand in front of the gamma camera for approximately 30 minutes while the scan takes place
- The gamma camera will be close to you, without touching, but you will never be totally enclosed.

Part 2
- You will be asked to return for the second part of your scan in one week’s time
- Please eat and drink as normal during this period
- The second part of the scan will take approximately 30 minutes.

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 after taking the capsule.

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/nuclear_medicine.html

Further sources of information
Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. Stating a web address does not imply we endorse a particular site. Neither does not stating a web address imply lack of endorsement.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
The PALS team is available to help with any of your comments, compliments or concerns and will ensure a prompt and efficient service. Contact details:

- King’s Mill Hospital 01623 672222
  (out of hours answer phone)
  Email: Pals.kmh@sfh-tr.nhs.uk

- Newark Hospital 01636 685692
  (out of hours answer phone)
  Email: Pals.nwk@sfh-tr.nhs.uk
If you need this information in a different language or format, please contact PALS, as above.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication, Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust cannot accept liability for errors and omissions. The information should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

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