SeHCAT isotope scan

This examination has 2 appointments, one week apart.
You will then be sent an appointment to see your hospital doctor to discuss the results when they are available.

**How do I find out more about the nuclear medicine scans?**

If you are unsure about anything concerning this procedure or require more information, please do not hesitate to call us on 01623 622515, ext 3284 or 3205. You may also like to read [http://www.goingfora.com/radiology/nuclear_medicine.html](http://www.goingfora.com/radiology/nuclear_medicine.html)

We have been requested by your consultant to arrange an isotope SeHCAT 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 appointments one week apart.

The aim of this leaflet is to explain what you can expect when you come for your nuclear medicine 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 which is swallowed in the form of a capsule.

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 and 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 breast feeding
- you weigh over 30 stones (200 kilos)

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

What happens during the scan?
You will need to report to the reception desk in the original x-ray department adjacent to A&E. 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 weeks’ 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 good practice 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.