Outstanding Care, Compassionate People, Healthier Communities

Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Undergoing a brain scan (DaTSCAN)

We have been requested by your consultant to arrange an isotope brain scan. This study is performed in our nuclear medicine department, and a scan is used to give the doctor images of your brain function. It is often used in patients who have a tremor or slowness of movement. 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 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, extension 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 a nuclear medicine scan?
Most patients are suitable for a nuclear medicine scan. However, you **must** contact us on 01623 622515, extension 3284/3205 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 this scan?
There are no restrictions regarding eating or drinking. If you are taking any medicines, you may continue to take these as normal unless your consultant asks you to stop taking any prior to this scan.

Please leave any valuables at home. You are responsible for all personal items you bring into hospital, and the Trust cannot accept responsibility for their loss or damage.

What happens on the day of my appointment?
You will need to report to the reception desk in the main x-ray department, which is adjacent to the Emergency Department.

From there you will be directed to the nuclear medicine department.

During your morning appointment you will be given two tablets to swallow to protect your thyroid gland from the radioactive injection; then you will be given an injection into your arm an hour after.

After the injection you will be free to leave the department. You may eat and drink as normal.

You will be asked to return for the scan approximately three to four hours after the injection (we will give you an exact time to return).

When you return for your scan, you will be asked to lie on a couch while pictures of your head are taken using a gamma camera. This will take approximately 30 minutes, and you will be required to lie very still during this time. The gamma camera will be close to you, without touching. You will never be totally enclosed.

Are there any risks to having a nuclear medicine scan?
The benefit from the nuclear medicine 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 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?
When your scan is finished no instant diagnosis can be made. The images produced are recorded digitally and reviewed and a report sent to your referring clinician.

These results will be discussed with you by your referring clinician. If you have been referred from the hospital and have not received your follow-up appointment within four weeks, please contact your consultant's patient coordinator.

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

Your radiology records
This Trust is part of a group of NHS hospitals in the East Midlands that have a shared NHS radiology system, which is used by our healthcare professionals to access your radiology records.

If necessary, your radiology records may also be accessed by healthcare professionals in other NHS hospitals in the East Midlands or NHS Service Providers, to ensure you receive consistent, safe and effective clinical care and treatment, irrespective of where you receive your care.

If you have any concerns about providing information or how we use it, please discuss this with radiology staff so that you fully understand the potential impact on your care or treatment.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222
Newark Hospital: 01636 685692
Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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