

Procedures/Diagnostic Tests

Parathyroid scan

You are scheduled for a parathyroid scan. This scan will help your doctor locate any abnormal parathyroid glands. The scan is a safe, effective, and painless way to get information about your parathyroid glands.

The scan uses two compounds containing a small amount of radioactive material, and is done for diagnostic purposes. This scan will be done in the Nuclear Medicine Department.

Preparation

There is no special preparation. You may eat and drink whatever you like before the scan.

Procedure

- You will be asked to lie down on an examination table.
- A pillow may be placed under your shoulders with your neck extended.
- You will be given two injections by vein: technetium pertechnetate and technetium sestamibi.
- After each injection, pictures will be taken with a very sensitive camera, called a gamma camera. This device receives and records the radiation in your thyroid and parathyroid glands. Please lie very still so that clear pictures can be taken.
- The scan lasts about 3 hours.

After the procedure

Drink plenty of liquids to flush the radioactive tracer from your body. The fluids also help keep your kidneys healthy.

If you have questions about the procedure, please ask. Your nurse and doctor are ready to assist you at all times.

Special instructions

- Because it uses radioactivity, this scan is not performed in pregnant women. *If you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant, please inform your doctor immediately so that a decision can be made about this scan.*
- *Also, please inform your doctor immediately if you are breast-feeding. Some scans can be performed in breast-feeding women if they are willing to stop breast-feeding for a while.*

This information is prepared specifically for persons taking part in clinical research at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center and may not apply to patients elsewhere. If you have questions about the information presented here, talk to a member of your health care team.

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