

About your nuclear medicine heart scan



Information for patients

Nuclear Medicine



PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SHEFFIELD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



What is a nuclear medicine heart scan?

This is a 2 part test which allows us to assess the blood supply to your heart, usually to help with the diagnosis of angina.

What will happen?

Appointment 1 is the stress test where we will scan your heart after exercising it with a special medication

- You will be given a drug that stimulates your heart and a small amount of a radioactive material that lets us see your heart when we scan you later.
- These will be given through a small needle in your arm or hand.
- This part of the test can take between 15 and 20 minutes, during which time your blood pressure and ECG (heart tracing) will be monitored.
- You will then need to wait while the radioactive material clears from around your heart; this will take between 1 and 2 hours.
- You will then be asked to lie still on a bed for around 10 minutes with your arms up while you are scanned.

What do I need to do before the first appointment?

Do	Do Not
Have a light meal but only drink water, fruit juices or milk	Do not eat or drink anything containing caffeine for 24 hours before the first appointment, this includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chocolate • Tea • Fizzy drinks / Cola • Coffee • Decaffeinated teas • Decaffeinated coffees • Energy drinks • Hot chocolate • Herbal teas
If you are diabetic please bring something to eat if required	Do not take any cold or flu medications that contain caffeine for 24 hours before your first appointment If you are unsure read the label or contact us directly
Take all medications as normal unless we have told you to stop them	
Contact us if you are taking the drug Dipyridamole	
Contact us if you are taking Viagra	
Bring your medications list (if you have one)	

Appointment 2 is the rest test where we scan your heart without exercising it.

- You will still have the radioactive injection, wait 1 to 2 hours and then have the 10 minute scan.
- You will not need to stop any medications or caffeine; you may eat and drink normally.

Each appointment can take up to 3 to 4 hours

When the scan is over, we will ask you to wait for a few minutes while we check that the pictures give a clear enough image of your heart. If they do not, we will have to scan you again.

What should I wear?

Please wear loose fitting, warm and comfortable clothes.

We will need to attach stickers to your chest. If your clothes are too tight we may ask you to wear a hospital gown.

Consent for the stress test

Please read the information below carefully.

This explains the benefits and risks of the stress test we will carry out on your **first appointment**.

You will be required to sign a consent form to give your agreement for us to go ahead with the test when you attend for your first appointment.

If there is anything you are unsure about, please contact the department directly or discuss it with a member of staff during your first appointment

Name of proposed procedure or course of treatment:

Pharmacological stress myocardial perfusion scan (nuclear medicine)

The intended benefits:

Investigate the presence of myocardial ischemia as a test for angina.

Serious or frequently occurring risks:

1 in 1,000 risk of myocardial infarction (heart attack), stroke or death.

Any extra procedures which may become necessary during the procedure:

Aminophylline may be given to reduce symptoms.

Benefits and risks of any available alternative treatments:

- Risk of alternative cardiac catheterisation test is 1 in 1,000 of myocardial infarction, stroke or death.
- Not undertaking the test means your consultant will not have all the information available to decide on the appropriate treatment for you. Alternative tests may be required.

Are there any risks from the radioactivity?

Nuclear medicine tests use ionising radiation to form images of your body or provide your doctor with clinical information. Ionising radiation can cause cell damage that may, after many years or decades, turn cancerous. We are all at risk of developing cancer during our lifetime. The normal risk is that this will happen to about 50% of people at some point in their life. This procedure will increase the chances of this happening to you from 50% to 50.2%.

The doctors caring for you consider that the benefits of having the test outweigh any risk from the radiation.

As with any other types of radiation (such as X-ray), there is a small risk that the gamma rays may affect an unborn child. It is important that you tell your doctor if you are pregnant or if you may be pregnant.

- After the scan, drink more than usual for the rest of the day to wash the radioactivity out of your body.
- **Do not bring children when you attend for your test.**
- It may be necessary for you to avoid prolonged close contact with children and pregnant women for a period (usually a few hours) following the scan. You will be given more information when you come for your scan.
- Occasionally, we advise patients not to return to work on the day of the test. This depends upon the type of work you do and we will advise you further when you attend for your test.

What if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

We need to make sure that you are not pregnant and will ask you about this when you come for the test. However, you should contact the Nuclear Medicine Department before your appointment if you are, or think you may be, pregnant.

Some radioactivity may go into your breast milk if you are breastfeeding. We need to make sure that there is no risk to babies from this procedure. Please contact the Nuclear Medicine Department before your appointment if you are breastfeeding.

Is there a weight limit on the scanner?

There is a weight limit on some of our equipment.

Please contact the Nuclear Medicine Department if you weigh more than 180kg (28 stone).

What happens to the results of the scan?

Your scan will be looked at by a cardiologist. A report is then sent to the doctor who asked for the scan. You will not receive any results directly from the Nuclear Medicine department.

What follow-up care will I need?

No special care should be needed following the scan.

Can we help make your visit easier?

If you have difficulty walking or lying flat, or you feel very unwell, please contact the Nuclear Medicine Department and ask to speak to someone about your needs, wherever possible before your appointment.

Please contact us before your appointment if you need an interpreter, as we will not be able to use members of your family as interpreters. Please let us know if we can help with other difficulties you may have, such as blindness or deafness.

Please let us know if you have any serious allergies.

What should I do if I cannot attend?

Please contact the Department as soon as possible if you are unable to attend for your appointment. This allows us to give the appointment to another patient and helps to reduce waiting times. If you do not attend and do not telephone the department to warn us, then your referral will be sent back to your doctor.

Travel following the scan

A little radioactivity will remain in your body for a period after your scan. There is a possibility that this may be picked up by the sensitive radiation detectors at some airports, train stations and seaports. This is no cause for concern, but you should tell us if you intend travelling abroad in the three days following your scan and we will provide an explanatory letter to carry with you.

Training staff in Nuclear Medicine

As we are a teaching hospital, our Medical Physics Department is involved in training staff. There will be students under training in the Department who may be observing scans or carrying out the scans under supervision. Please inform us if you do not wish to have a student present.

Car parking

A number of 'pay-and-display' car parks are available. However, these do get full so allow extra time before your appointment.

Please note: if you are arranging for someone to collect you after your test, they should pick you up from the Medical Physics Department, which is situated close to the Sheffield Kidney Institute on Vickers Corridor (level E), Northern General Hospital.

No smoking policy

Please note that Sheffield Teaching Hospitals operates a no smoking policy in and around all its premises. We ask that you please respect this policy.

Where can I find any further information?

You may also like to watch our video about coming into hospital for your heart scan. To do this just scan the QR code below with your mobile phone to launch the video. If you don't have a QR code reader, you can download one from Google Play or the App Store.



Nuclear Medicine: Heart scan

Alternatively you can watch the video on the internet by going to:
<http://video.sth.nhs.uk/radiology>

For more information about the hospital and how to find us please see our website at: **www.sth.nhs.uk**

Who should I speak to if I have any questions or concerns?

If you need to know more about your scan before your scan date, please contact our reception on **0114 271 4374** and ask for a member of the Nuclear Medicine Team.

If you have any questions about your clinical condition you should contact your doctor.

If you feel that there are any aspects of the test that may conflict with your personal or religious beliefs, please let us know as soon as possible.



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