

Bone scan

This fact sheet tells you what a bone scan is, and what is involved. Please read this sheet before having your scan. If you have any questions, ask your doctor.

What is a bone scan?

A bone scan is a nuclear medicine test that takes images of your bones. It is done by injecting a small amount of a radiopharmaceutical (radioactive tracer) into a vein in your arm using a needle. A special camera (called a gamma camera) is used to track the radioactive tracer and take the pictures.

A bone scan can pick up infections, stress fractures or cancer.

What is involved?

There is no special preparation for a bone scan.

Before the procedure, you should tell your doctor and the imaging staff if you have any allergies, are breastfeeding, are pregnant or think you might be pregnant.

After receiving the radioactive tracer, the gamma camera will be used to take the scans.

There are two parts of the test. For the first part, you will have a scan that takes about 30 minutes. For the second part, you will have more scans about two to three hours later.

You may eat and drink between the two parts of the test. You will be asked to go to the toilet before the second part of the test to empty your bladder.

What happens after the test?

A nuclear medicine physician (a specialist doctor) will assess the images and send the results to your referring doctor. You should not have any problems after the test.

Are there any risks?

While all nuclear medicine tests involve some exposure to radiation, the amount is very small, so the risk of side effects is very low. Allergic reactions are very rare and almost always mild.

For more information

Nuclear medicine: Answering your questions by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation: www.ansto.gov.au/cs/groups/corporate/documents/webcontent/mdaw/mdax/~edisp/acstest_038604.pdf

InsideRadiology by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists: www.insideradiology.com.au

The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency: www.arpsansa.gov.au

For more information, please contact:

LHD:

Name:

Phone:

Email: