

## Parathyroid scan

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

### What is a parathyroid scan?

A parathyroid scan is a nuclear medicine test using an injection of a small amount of a radiopharmaceutical (radioactive tracer) through a needle in a vein in your arm. Later, a machine will take pictures of the parathyroid glands in your neck to look at how they are working.

Parathyroid glands in your throat make the hormone that regulates the amounts of calcium, phosphorus and magnesium in your bones and blood.

### Procedure

No special preparation is necessary for a parathyroid scan. You may eat and drink and take your usual medications.

**You should tell your doctor and the imaging staff if you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant.**

Please allow three hours for this scan. You will be scanned twice. The first scan will start 15 minutes after your injection and usually takes an hour. There will be a break where you might be able to leave the department for a short time.

Another set of pictures will be taken, usually two hours after your injection. This scan also takes about an hour.

The doctor may ask you to come back for a thyroid scan on a different day.

### After the procedure

A nuclear medicine physician (a specialist doctor) will look at the images and send the results to your treating doctor. You should not have any issues after the scan.

### Risks involved

While all nuclear medicine tests involve some exposure to radiation, the amount is very small and the risk of any side effects is very low.

### 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](http://www.ansto.gov.au/cs/groups/corporate/documents/webcontent/mdaw/mdax/~edisp/acstest_038604.pdf)

Better Health Channel, by the Victorian Government: [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/parathyroid-glands](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/parathyroid-glands)

The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency: [www.arpansa.gov.au](http://www.arpansa.gov.au)

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