

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

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# Undergoing a lymph scan

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We have been requested by your consultant to arrange an isotope lymphoscintigraphy scan.

This study is performed in our Nuclear Medicine department and enables us to look at the function of the lymphatic system. The lymphatic system is responsible for returning tissue fluids to the bloodstream

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 radio-pharmaceutical 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 or 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.

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 during the scan?**

You will need to report to the reception desk in the original x-ray department, which is adjacent to the Emergency Department. From there you will be directed to the nuclear medicine department.

You will be given an injection of a special solution.

If we are scanning your upper limb, the injection will be given between the thumb and the index finger and the index finger and middle finger on both hands.

If we are scanning your lower limb, the injection will be given between first and second toes of both feet.

You will be required to lie on the imaging couch for approximately 45 minutes while the scan takes place. The scan will be repeated three hours later. You may eat and drink normally at all times.

**Are there any risks to having an isotope scan?**

The benefit from the isotope 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](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

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

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