

Gastric emptying study (liquid)

Patient information factsheet

What is a nuclear medicine scan?

- A nuclear medicine scan is a very common medical procedure.
- It uses small amounts of radioactive materials to show a specific organ.
- This helps your Doctor diagnose (find the problem) and, in some cases, treat some diseases.
- The scan uses a gamma camera to look for signs of disease.
- It shows the Doctor how well your organs are working. Other types of scans show what your organs look like.

What is a Gastric Emptying Study?

- A gastric emptying study assesses the gastric motor function in patients with:
 - unexplained upper gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms such as pain, nausea, vomiting, early satiety (satisfied feeling of fullness), dyspepsia (indigestion or an upset stomach), or
 - abnormal retention of meal that has been seen on other tests.
- It can also help diagnose conditions like gastric reflux or aspiration.

Do I have to do anything to prepare for this procedure?

- **PLEASE CALL US IF YOU HAVE DIETARY REQUIREMENTS OR VOMIT WHEN EATING.**
- Please bring your feeding equipment and liquid meal.
- You need to fast from midnight (NO FOOD OR DRINK).
- Please **STOP** the following drugs **2** days before your scan: **Metoclopramide, Domperidone, Tegaserod, and Erythromycin**. Please contact us if you have any questions about taking your tablets.

- **FOR DIABETIC PATIENTS**
 - **Please come 30 minutes earlier than your appointment time.**
 - Please bring your glucose monitor and short acting insulin with you.
 - You will have no food for most of the morning other than the liquid meal you will be asked to bring along with you to your appointment.
 - Please adjust your insulin intake as necessary: the scan requires your sugar levels to be within a certain range, otherwise we may not be able to do it.

What happens on the day of the scan?

On arrival

- A radioactive label will be mixed with 100 ml of your liquid feed.
- The labelled feed will be given through the tube using syringes and flushed with sterile water.
- Normal feed using your feeding pump will commence after this at the usual rate and will be infused for one hour.
- The scan of your abdomen will start as soon as the labelled meal is given.
- You will be scanned for about an hour, while lying down flat on our scanning bed.

2 hours after the meal

- Extra images of your abdomen will be taken for about 10 minutes.
- The images will then be reviewed and further delayed imaging, up to four hours after the meal, may be required.

Is it dangerous?

- The scans are safe and painless.
- Because a small amount of radioactive tracer is used, there is only a very small risk of radiation exposure.

- If you have any worries or questions about the scan, please talk to your Doctor or contact the Nuclear Medicine department.

Are there any precautions?

- Please tell the Nuclear Medicine Technologist or Radiographer if you might be pregnant or are breastfeeding before you come to your appointment.
- **You might need to stop breastfeeding for a short time after your scan.**
- Please tell us if you are very afraid of needles (needle phobia), feel anxious in small spaces (claustrophobia), or cannot lie down flat.

What happens after the scan?

- Drink lots of water.
- The radioactive tracer leaves your body through your pee (urine). Drinking lots of water will help get rid of it faster.
- **Do not have any blood or urine tests for 24 hours after your scan because the radioactive tracer may still be in your body.**

How do I get my result?

- A Radiologist reviews (looks at) the scan and sends the report to the Specialist Doctor who asked for it. They will then contact you directly.
- This can take about 2 to 3 weeks.

Is there anything else I should know?

- You will need to lie down flat and stay still during the scan. Moving can make the pictures unclear.
- **Please do not bring anyone with you who is pregnant or under 18 years old.** This is because there are radioactive materials in the department.

- **We do not allow anyone under 18** to interpret for patients.
- If you need an interpreter, please tell the Nuclear Medicine department, and they will arrange one for you.

Contact our service

Email: whh-tr.nuclearmedwhitthealth@nhs.net

Monday to Thursday, 9 am to 5 pm: 020 7288 5517.

Friday: Please call our mobile on 07747 037 143.

Contact our Trust

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on **020 7288 5551** or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net.

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet, please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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Document information

Date published: 01/04/2026 | Review date: 01/04/2028 | Ref: ACW/Imag/GastEmpStuLiq/01
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