

Renogram and Cystogram

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 highlight a specific organ.
- This helps your Doctor diagnose (find the problem) and, in some cases, treat a number of 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 Renogram and Cystogram

- A Renogram looks at how well the kidneys are functioning.
- The Cystogram looks for a condition called urinary reflux which is assessed whilst your child empties their bladder.
- Images are taken using a Gamma Camera.
- A small amount of radioactivity is used to produce these pictures.
- **Please come 2 hours earlier for cannulation (so that we can put a small tube into the patient's vein).**

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

- Yes. If possible, ensure the patient is well hydrated (drinks plenty of water) before coming for the appointment.
- The patient can empty their bladder as needed.
- The patient can take their prescribed medications and eat normally for this procedure.

What happens on the day of the scan?

On arrival

- Please come to the Imaging department to book in for the scan.
- You will then be asked to go to Rose's Day Unit or IFOR ward.
- A small tube (cannula) will be inserted into the patient's vein to allow the injection to be given.

After the cannula has been inserted

- You need to go back to the Imaging department, where a radioactive tracer will be injected into the cannula.
- The radioactive tracer will allow us to see the patient's kidneys under our special camera.

Imaging (the taking of the images)

- The patient will be positioned lying down on an imaging table.
- The radiotracer will be injected through the cannula and the scan will be started simultaneously.
- It is important that patient keeps still while the images are being taken.
- Extra images of the full and empty bladder will also be done.
- The entire scan can take up to 40 minutes.
- To look for the presence of reflux, a picture of the bladder will also be taken while the patient urinates (pees).
- A 1-hour delayed scan of the kidneys might be needed depending on the images obtained from the initial scan.

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.
- **FOR VERY YOUNG CHILDREN:** Please let us know if there may be any potty-training issues or if you have any concerns on whether your child will tolerate the procedure.

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.
- The scan can take anywhere from 15 to 60 minutes. This will depend on the type of procedure you are having.

- **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.
- It might help to bring your child's favourite toy or a tablet to keep the child occupied during the procedure.

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.

020 7272 3070 | Whittington Health NHS Trust, Magdala Avenue, London, N19 5NF
www.whittington.nhs.uk | x.com/WhitHealth | facebook.com/WhittingtonHealth

Document information

Date published: 13/02/2026 | Review date: 23/02/2028 | Ref: ACW/Imag/Renog&Cystog/02
© Whittington Health NHS Trust. Please recycle