

### What is a brain perfusion scan?

It is a simple procedure, similar to an X-ray, in which a small amount of radioactive material is injected to provide pictures of the blood flow in your brain.

### Why am I having this test?

We may perform this test:

- when other types of brain scan have not diagnosed your condition
- to assess a wide range of brain or mental health disorders
- when your doctor wishes to alter your medication for a brain related disorder

### What does it involve?

When you arrive we will insert a special needle called a cannula into a vein in your arm to use later in the procedure to give you an injection. We will lie you down in a dimly lit room to relax for a short time.

Your injection will be given and you will continue to lie quietly for 10 minutes afterwards.

During this time it is important that you do not talk or read and you will be asked to keep your eyes open.

Approximately 1 hour later we will take some pictures of the blood flow in your brain using a special machine called a gamma camera. This takes 30 minutes and all you need to do is keep very still while the pictures are taken.

### Will it hurt?

Only the pinprick of the injection may hurt a little - it is similar to a blood test that you may have had before. You should not notice any untoward effects from the injection, it will not make you feel sleepy or prevent you from driving a car.

### Do I need to prepare for the test?

Avoid drinks containing caffeine such as tea, coffee, cola, energy drinks and smoking from 10 pm the night before as these may affect our results.

### Can I take my medication?

You will generally not need to stop your medication for this procedure unless your own doctor tells you to do so.

You should not take any sedatives on the morning of your scan appointment.

### Note for female patients

Please contact the department before your appointment if there is a chance you may be pregnant or if you are breastfeeding.

### Is the radiation dangerous?

No, even though you will be injected with a radioactive material the amount involved is very small indeed and is usually similar to an equivalent X-ray

### Are there any special precautions afterwards?

The only thing we do advise is to avoid prolonged close contact with children or pregnant women for the remainder of the day - simply to avoid exposing them to any unnecessary radiation.

For children under investigation, the radiation dose is so low that there is no need to observe the above precaution.

The radioactivity disappears naturally by a process called decay.

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### **What happens to the results?**

The results take several days to process. They will then be seen by a doctor in the department and a report will be sent to the doctor who asked us to do the scan

### **General**

There are no lockable facilities in Radiology. We strongly recommend that any valuables are left at home. Please be aware that CCDHB does not take responsibility for any loss or damage of personal property belonging to patients whilst on CCDHB premises

### **Contact us**

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