

What is a Nuclear Medicine Bone Scan?

A Nuclear Medicine Bone Scan is a test to examine the effects of injury, disease (e.g. cancer) or infection on the bones. They are also used as a follow-up test when the cause of your pain or symptoms needs to be clarified.

Preparation for the scan

No preparation is required.

Please contact the department if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

About the procedure

You will have two appointments for this procedure.

During your first appointment you will receive an injection of a small amount of radioactive tracer into a vein in your arm.

Sometimes images are acquired immediately after the injection to see how blood flows to the area in question. This depends on why your doctor has requested the scan.

Between your two appointments you will be encouraged to drink extra fluids (tea, coffee, water, juice).

By urinating frequently you will remove radioactive tracer that has not collected in your bones.

You will return in the afternoon for imaging of your bones to see how they are functioning. These images can take up to one (1) hour.

Is it safe?

The amount of radioactive material given for the procedure is small. You will not need to take any precautions after the scan.

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.

Results

The Nuclear Medicine Physician will evaluate the results of your scan and send a report to your doctor.

The results are usually available approximately one week following the procedure.

Contact us

Phone: (04) 806 2193

Hours: 8am-4pm, Monday to Friday

Email: radiology.admin@ccdhb.org.nz