

What is a Nuclear Medicine Liver/Spleen Colloid Scan?

A Nuclear Medicine Liver/Spleen Colloid Scan is performed to assess the size, shape and position of the liver and spleen.

It is also useful for detecting and diagnosing chronic liver disease (e.g. jaundice, cirrhosis) and liver masses (cysts, tumours).

Preparation for the scan

You need to fast for **eight (8) hours before** the scan.

Fill out the accompanying CT Contrast questionnaire and bring this along to your appointment.

If you take Metformin, you will need to stop this medication for **2 days before** the appointment and get a blood test before restarting it.

You can continue to take all other medications.

Please contact the department if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

About the procedure

Initially you will be injected with a small amount of radioactive tracer into a vein in your arm. This will be absorbed by your liver and spleen to provide information about how these organs are functioning.

Imaging will start approximately 20 minutes after the radioactive injection.

The first part of the scan involves CT imaging of your liver/spleen. Immediately before the scan is started you will be injected with CT contrast to enhance the CT images.

Once the CT is completed the camera will automatically acquire the second part of the scan to see where and how the radioactive tracer was absorbed.

Altogether the procedure should take approximately 60 minutes.

Is it safe?

Radioactive Injection:

The amount of radioactive material given for the scan is small. There are no associated side effects, and you will not need to take any precautions after the scan.

CT Contrast:

During injection of the CT contrast you may experience a metallic taste in your mouth and a warm feeling that spreads throughout your body. You may also have the sensation that you are passing urine, but you are not.

There is a risk of an allergic reaction to the contrast injection. Minor reactions include skin rash, nausea or vomiting. These are temporary and usually need no special treatment.

More serious reactions, although very rare, may include difficulty breathing and swelling in parts of the body. Trained professionals, emergency equipment and drugs are always available for

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prompt treatment in response to this type of reaction.

If you have had a previous serious allergic reaction to CT contrast media please contact the department.

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

