



Prostascint Scan

What is a prostascint scan?

It is a nuclear scan of the prostate gland and surrounding area. The scan uses a special antibody combined with a radioactive material to help locate prostate cancer that may have spread to the lymph nodes.

How do I prepare for a prostascint scan? This is a two-part study. No special preparation is needed for your first visit, when the material will be injected. The actual scan will take place 5 to 7 days later, so you will need to clear your calendar on those days. The technologist will tell you when to return for the scan. If lying flat causes discomfort, please bring pain medication with you.

Is a nuclear medicine study safe?

Nuclear medicine scans are generally safe. The injection that is given has a small amount of radioactive material and must meet rigid safety standards.

What happens before the scan?

A nuclear medicine technologist will give the prostascint material through a vein in your arm. The technologist will monitor you during the injection and for a short time after. You will be given a date and time to return to the Nuclear Medicine department for the initial scan. You may be asked to take an oral laxative (given to you by the technologist) the night before the scan to remove bowel material from the colon.

Are there side effects?

Most people tolerate the injection well. A few patients (about 3 to 4%) report mild fever, chills, rash, itching or change in blood pressure after the injection. These reactions occur only during the first few minutes after the injection, and normally no serious side effects occur. For this reason, the technologist monitors you during and after the injection.

What happens during the actual scanning?

When you return for the imaging session, the scan begins with a whole-body scan that takes about 40 minutes. We will also do a SPECT/CT scan (where the cameras rotate around your body) of the abdomen and pelvis that takes about 50 minutes.

How many imaging sessions are there? The images are reviewed by a nuclear medicine physician. The physician may ask for more scans to be done on the first scanning day, or occasionally on a second day. These scans are needed to clarify questions the physician may have about your test results.

What happens after imaging is completed?

You will be able to resume your normal activities.

How do I find out the results of my prostascint scan?

Your scan will be reviewed by a nuclear medicine physician. The Nuclear Medicine department will send a written report to your physician, who will discuss the results with you.