

Nuclear Medicine Gastric Emptying Scan

Information for patients, relatives and carers

ⓘ For more information, please contact: Nuclear Medicine, Radiology Department, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 725936 or email yhs-tr.ctconfirmations@nhs.net.

About this leaflet

In this leaflet we tell you about the procedure known as a Nuclear Medicine gastric emptying scan. We explain what is involved and what the possible risks are. The information in this leaflet is not meant to replace informed discussion between you and your doctor but can act as a starting point for such a discussion.

What is a Gastric Emptying Scan?

This is a type of scan that uses a radioactive tracer to tell us if your stomach is emptying normally. The scan tells us how well your stomach empties solid food. We take pictures using a gamma camera. The date and time you need to attend will be written on your appointment letter.

Are there any alternatives?

There may be alternative imaging studies available. However, your doctor has decided this test is the most appropriate for you. If you have any concerns, please discuss them with the doctor who referred you to us.

What preparation is needed before the gastric emptying scan?

It is important that you do not eat, drink or smoke from midnight the night before your scan. You can have water for taking any medication on the day of the scan.

Some medications can affect the results of the scan. **If you take any of the following medication, please stop taking it for 48 hours before your scan:**

- Metoclopramide
- Domperidone
- Ethromycin
- Pucalopride
- Morphine (and any medicines containing morphine)
- Hyoscine butyl bromide
- Cimetidine
- Loperamide

Please bring a list of your medications to this appointment.

- If you are diabetic please telephone the nuclear medicine department as soon as possible.
- If you have an allergy to egg, gluten or dairy products please contact the nuclear medicine department as soon as possible.

You will not be asked to remove your clothes for the scan, but it is a good idea to wear clothing that does not have a lot of metal on it. Small buttons and zips are fine.

What happens during the gastric emptying scan?

We will ask you to eat a standardised meal containing a small amount of a radioactive tracer so that we can follow the meal's passage through your stomach. This meal consists of scrambled egg with bread and butter and the radioactive tracer does not make it taste funny, or make you feel any different. You will need to eat this meal as quickly as you can and then you will be asked to stand in front of the gamma camera for a two minute picture. We will take pictures every 30 minutes for the first hour, and then hourly for up to four hours. Each picture only takes two minutes, and you can sit in the waiting room between the pictures. Because there is quite a lot of waiting around, it is a good idea to bring a book or something to do. You will not be allowed to eat or drink anything else until the scan has finished.

What happens after the gastric emptying scan?

After the scan you will be free to leave the Nuclear Medicine department, and you can eat and drink normally.

Are there any risks or complications?

Nuclear Medicine procedures are very safe diagnostic imaging tests. Side effects from the radioactive tracers are extremely rare. The amount of radioactivity involved is very small, and after 24 hours most of the radioactive tracer will have passed out of your body. There is radiation in the air and ground all around us called background radiation. Most radioisotope scans give you on average the equivalent of a year's background radiation or less.

This scan is not recommended for pregnant women. If you are pregnant, or might be pregnant, or if you are breastfeeding, please let us know before your appointment.

Results

You will not be given the results on the day of your scan. A report will be sent to the doctor who asked us to do the test. They will then let you know the results.

What if I have any other questions?

If you have any worries or questions about your scan, please feel free to telephone us on 01904 726696 and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Radiology Department, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 726696.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email
yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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