



Having a HIDA scan

A HIDA scan is a nuclear medicine study used to evaluate your gallbladder function. It is also used to look at the bile excreting function of your liver and to track the flow of bile from your liver into your small intestine.

A HIDA scan might help in the diagnosis of several diseases and conditions, such as:

- Gallbladder inflammation (cholecystitis)
 - Bile duct obstruction
 - Congenital abnormalities in the bile ducts, such as biliary atresia
 - Postoperative complications, such as bile leaks and fistulas
 - Assessment of liver transplant
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Is it safe for me to have the scan?

For this scan it is necessary to inject a small amount of radioactive tracer (radiopharmaceutical) in order to do the scan. The small risk from this radiation dose is outweighed by the information provided by having the scan. In the end of this leaflet there is a table mentioning various radiation risks and you can ask us if you need any more information. All scans are vetted to make sure they are the appropriate test for you.

If you don't understand why you need to have this scan, please speak to the doctor who referred you.

For female patients

If you know that you are pregnant, or there is any chance that you may be pregnant, then please contact the department where you will be having the scan. **Do this as soon as possible as the scan can be postponed if it is not urgent. Also contact the department if you are breastfeeding**, as we may give you special instructions.

Preparation for your scan

Adult patients should not have anything to eat or drink apart from plain water for a minimum of 2 hours and preferably 6 hours before the scan. **In addition, you should avoid smoking for this time.** Children should be instructed to fast for 2–4 hours, whereas infants need to fast for only 2 hours before the scan.

Your injection

A small amount of radioactive tracer will be injected into a vein in your arm or hand. The injection does not have any side effects and will not make you feel any different, it will feel like a blood test. The scan will be performed immediately after the injection.

Your scan

The scan is taken by a special machine called a gamma camera.

The camera detector will come close to you. There are sensors in the camera which stop it from moving if it gets too close so it won't touch you.

You will not have to get undressed, but you will be asked to remove any jewellery. You will be asked to lie on your back on a special couch – as in the picture. The scan will take up to an hour and you must keep still throughout.

You will be asked to drink a milkshake (a lactose-free version is available) – and more images are taken afterwards. The results will be processed and reported on by a specialist radiologist.



After your scan

It is very unlikely that you will feel any side effects after the scan, but if you think that you have please let the Medical Physics Department know.

You may continue all your normal activities unless you have been advised otherwise.

After your scan there will be some radioactivity left in your body but this will not present a significant risk to other people around you. The radioactivity in your body will soon disappear, and we advise you to continue to drink plenty of liquids as this will help clear the radioactivity more quickly.

Your results

Your HIDA scan will be looked at by a specialist doctor, who will issue a report. The report will be sent to the doctor who requested your scan rather than to your GP. This is because the doctor who requested your scan will have all the results from other tests and will be able to tell you how the result of your HIDA scan affects your care.

Contacting us

Nuclear Medicine / Medical Physics Department, Level 1 North Block,
Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

If you have any questions about your treatment, please ask the staff looking after you or telephone 0118 322 7355 or email: rbb-tr.physics@nhs.net

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Nuclear Medicine / Medical Physics Department.
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The table below is a simple guide to the levels of radiation risks for various examinations. These are measured in millisieverts (mSv).

Source of exposure (using RBFT local diagnostic reference levels (DRLs) for Nuclear Medicine)	Dose
Having a chest x-ray	0.014 mSv
Taking a transatlantic flight	0.08 mSv
HIDA Gall Bladder scan	2.4 mSv
UK average annual radiation dose	2.7 mSv
CT scan of the chest – CT scan of whole spine	6.6 mSv – 10 mSv