NHS
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Having a renogram scan

A renogram is a scan of your kidneys to see how well each kidney is working, and whether urine from the kidneys passes down into the bladder without obstruction. For this test, you may be given a diuretic that will make your kidneys empty faster.

Is it safe for me to have the scan?

For this scan it is necessary to inject a small amount of radioactive tracer, called a radiopharmaceutical, in order to take the pictures. The small risk from this radiation dose is outweighed by the valuable information that will be gained by having the scan. There is a table of various radiation risks at the end of this leaflet. Ask if you want any more information. All investigations are checked to make sure this is 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, please contact the department if you are breastfeeding**, as we may give you special instructions.

Preparation for your scan

Unless your doctor has told you to have restricted fluids, please make sure that you drink plenty of non-alcoholic drinks before the renogram (approximately three cups before you come to the department and three more once you are here). You may go to the toilet as much as you like, you do not need to keep your bladder full. You can eat normally. If you are taking diuretic medicines (water tablets) please let us know. You can take any other medicine as normal.

Your injection and scan

You will be asked to go to the toilet to empty your bladder before the test is started.

You will not have to get undressed, but you will be asked to remove any metal objects like a belt. We will also weigh you to calculate how much of the diuretic to prepare.

The pictures are taken by a special machine called a gamma camera. You will be asked to lie on a bed, or sit on a special chair, with the camera behind your back. A small amount of radioactive tracer will be injected into a vein in your arm using a cannula.

You will then be asked to lie still for about 40 minutes while the camera takes a series of pictures of the injection passing through your kidneys. Often, it is also necessary to give another injection of a diuretic called Furosemide, a substance which makes your kidneys produce more urine, but you will be able to go to the toilet when you need to during the test. You will not be left on your own – there will always be someone immediately available.

After your scan

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 effect of the diuretic will wear off after a few hours, but you may feel the need to go to the toilet more frequently or urgently. Drinking plenty of fluids will replace what has been lost in your urine.

It is very unlikely that you will feel any other side effects after the scan, but if you think that you have please let the Medical Physics Department know. After the scan you may continue all your normal activities unless you have been advised otherwise.

Your results

Your renogram 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.

Contacting us

Medical Physics Department, Level 1 North Block, Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00pm.

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.

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Next review due: March 2028

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
MAG3 Renogram (adult dose only)	**0.7 mSv**
UK average annual radiation dose	**2.6 mSv**
CT scan of the chest – CT scan of whole spine	6.6 mSv – 10 mSv