



Having a DSG

A DSG or dacryoscintigraphy is carried out to check the drainage of your tear ducts. This leaflet explains what to expect during the scan.

Is it safe for me to have the scan?

For this scan it is necessary to use a very small amount of a radioactive tracer as eye drops to take the pictures. 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 authorised by an appropriate person 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.

Preparation for your scan

You are advised to avoid eye makeup and remove contact lenses before the scan. You can eat, drink and take any medicines as normal.

Your scan

A small amount of radioactive tracer will be dropped into your eye as an eye drop, in each eye. This will not make your eyes hurt or affect your vision. It will feel like dropping water into your eyes. You should try not blink during drop administration. The scan will be performed immediately after this, with some intervals between pictures. It will last around 45 minutes in total. The scan is taken by a special machine called a gamma camera. You will be positioned with your face close to the camera, with your chin on a chin rest. You will not be left on your own – there will always be someone immediately available.



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, including driving, 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.

Your results

Your DSG 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 scan affects your care.

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

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| Please ask if you need this information in another language or format. |
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RBFT Physics & Clinical Engineering Department, January 2026.
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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 |
| DSG Lacrimal drainage | 0.04 mSv |
| Taking a transatlantic flight | 0.08 mSv |
| UK average annual radiation dose | 2.7 mSv |