

Having a renogram scan as an outpatient

A renogram involves a scan of your kidneys to see how well each kidney is working, and whether urine passes on into the bladder without obstruction. You may be given a diuretic, which 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. Ask if you want any more information. All investigations are vetted 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 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 can eat normally. If you are diabetic or if you are taking diuretic medicines 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 braces, jewellery and belts before the test starts. We will 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. If you are lying down, there will be another camera detector in front of you.

A small amount of radioactive tracer will be injected into a vein in your arm. You may have had a blood test in the past, this is much the same. You will feel the 'pinprick' of the needle a bit but that is all.



You then just have to lie or sit still for about 40 minutes whilst the gamma camera takes a series of pictures of the tracer passing through your kidneys.

Sometimes it is also necessary to give another injection of a diuretic, a substance which makes your kidneys produce more urine, but you will be able to go to the toilet when you need to. Some more pictures may be taken later after you have been to the toilet. 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 radioactivity in your body will soon disappear, but if you continue to drink plenty of liquids this will help clear the radioactivity more quickly. 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. Please bear this in mind when you are travelling home or planning your activities for the next few hours. 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 renogram 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 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 renogram scan affects your care.

If you have any questions about your treatment, please ask the staff looking after you or telephone 0118 322 7355 (fax: 0118 322 7377)

or email : PhysicsDepartment@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

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Reception: Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00pm

For more information about the Trust, visit our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This information can be made available in other languages and formats upon request

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