

## Having a SeHCAT scan as an outpatient

---

A SeHCAT scan is a diagnostic procedure which looks at one aspect of the function of your bowel. SeHCAT stands for selenium homocholic acid taurine and this test involves swallowing a capsule which contains a very small amount of radioactive powder followed by imaging with equipment called a gamma camera. The capsule contains a synthetic bile salt which has been “labelled” so that it is slightly radioactive. Its chemical name is [75Se] tauroselcholic acid. The test shows how well your gut is able to absorb bile salts – whether the bile salts are absorbed normally or if these are being excreted from the gut too quickly.

---

### Is it safe for me to have the scan?

The small risk from this radiation dose is outweighed by the useful 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

Due to the radiation involved, there is a very small risk to an unborn or breastfeeding child. Therefore, it is important that you let us know in advance if you are, or may be, pregnant or are breastfeeding.

### Preparation for your scan

The test does not take long, but it requires three separate attendances – with two on the first day and another one seven days later. It is important that you attend each of the appointment times, otherwise the procedure cannot be completed.

If you are having any procedures related to your problem in the week before the first appointment or between the two appointments, please contact Medical Physics on the number at the end of this leaflet.

There is very little preparation required and you can eat and drink normally at all times. If you are taking any anti-diarrhoea medication we ask you to stop taking it from one day before the start of the test for the following week. Please let us know if you cannot do this and have taken anti-diarrhoea medicine at any time during the procedure. Other medication can be taken as normal.

It is fine if you want someone to come with you on the days of the scan. However, because we only have one waiting room, we advise you not to be accompanied by children or pregnant women to help to minimise the radiation exposure to these people.

### Your scan

When you arrive in the department you will be given a capsule to swallow with water. There are no side effects from the radioactive material. No special precautions are necessary because the radiation dose used is very small, so it is quite safe for you to be near other people.

After taking the capsule, you can eat and drink normally. You do not have to stay in the department.

You will be asked to return to the department for us to take counts after three hours on the first day, and then for another count a week later. The time in between taking the capsule and the counts can be spent as you please and you are not required to stay in the hospital. To obtain the images/counts you will be asked to lie flat on your back on a couch, which is then moved to line up with the gamma camera, which will be above you. After five minutes we will ask you to turn over onto your tummy for another five minute count. During the counting, you keep still and breathe normally; you do not have to undress. You will not be enclosed in a tunnel and you will not be left alone during the scan.

### After your scan

After the images have been taken, you may leave the department.

### Your results

The results of this test will be sent to your consultant who requested the test. Your clinician will discuss what your test result means.

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](mailto:PhysicsDepartment@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

Medical Physics Department, Level 1 North Block

Reception: Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00pm

For more information about the Trust, visit our website [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

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

Physics & Clinical Engineering Department, November 2017. Review due November 2018