Nuclear Medicine Exams

What is a Nuclear Medicine Exam?
A Nuclear Medicine exam is done to show how a certain part of your body is working and how to treat it. These exams can evaluate your heart, bones, thyroid, lungs, kidneys and many other organs. Once the test is completed, your doctor can use the results to make a specific plan to treat you. In some cases, Nuclear Medicine is also used to treat specific diseases.

Why is it done?
Doctors use these exams to:
- Check for heart disease, and measure the strength of the heart.
- Evaluate bones for trauma or cancer.
- Check thyroid function, and treat an overactive thyroid gland.
- Evaluate lung, kidney, and gallbladder function.
- Check for certain types of cancers.
- Find potentially cancerous lymph nodes.

How is it done?
- For most nuclear medicine exams, you will receive an injection of a small amount of radioactive medicine. This medicine helps your doctor see a detailed image of a specific area of your body with a gamma camera.
- Some exams are completed in as little as 15 minutes, and some can take several days.
- Please ask your doctor and/or medical team if you have any questions about your exam.

How do I prepare for the test?
- Each exam has different preparation, and many do not require any preparation at all.
- Please speak with your doctor’s office or the nuclear medicine team to learn how to prepare for your exam.

Do I have special instructions after the test?
- There are no special instructions after imaging tests have ended.
- You can resume all normal activities.
- You can eat and drink, just as long as you do not have other exams that have specific preparation instructions.
- There are special instructions when Nuclear Medicine is used to treat diseases. The radiologist or the technologist will go over those with you.

How long will it take to get my results?
- Your scan will be read on the same day.
- The results will then be sent to your doctor.

If you have any questions, please call (314) 454-8945.

Disclaimer: This material provides general information only. It should not be used in place of the advice, instructions, or treatment given by your doctor or other health care professional.
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