



Royal Cornwall Hospitals
NHS Trust

White cell scan (one day study)



One + all | we care

Who is this leaflet for?

Your doctor would like you to have a nuclear medicine white cell scan and has arranged for you to visit our department. This leaflet aims to answer any questions you may have, but please don't hesitate to contact us if you need any more information.

What is a white cell scan?

This is a sensitive test that can show infection in your body.

Are there any alternatives?

There are other tests such as MRI, CT scan or X-ray, which could be useful depending upon where the infection is. However you may need these tests as well as your white cell scan.

Do I need to prepare for it?

No, but we advise you to wear loose and comfortable clothing, preferably with no metal buttons or buckles. Eat and drink normally.

Please note: We will not normally perform this test within 48 hours of taking antibiotics, if you are taking these please contact us urgently. You may continue taking any other prescribed medication.

What will happen?

When you arrive in the department a sample of blood will be taken. You may then leave the department and return around two hours later; your radiographer will discuss the return time

with you. You will then be given an injection which contains your white blood cells and a small amount of radioactivity. It is very unlikely that you will have any side effects from this injection.

With any injection, there is a small risk that some of the tracer may leak around the injection site. The risk associated with this is very small (eg. reddening or darkening of skin) and we will advise on any follow up in the unlikely event that this should affect you.

You will need to return to the department later for your scan, usually one hour and four hours after your injection. The radiographer will discuss the return times with you.

How is the scan performed?

You will be asked to lie on a bed for about 30 minutes, while the radiographer takes pictures. The camera will be positioned close to the part of the body being studied, but you will not usually have to remove any clothing.

Is it suitable for everyone?

If there is a chance that you may be pregnant or are breast-feeding, please contact us before your appointment date. Those patients aged between 12 and 55 years may be asked their pregnancy status. If there is any doubt we will have to rebook your test, unless the test is urgent.

If you have any special requirements regarding manual handling, or if you suffer from urinary incontinence, please inform us before you attend

your appointment so that we can make suitable arrangements to help you.

Can I buy food at the hospital?

Yes, you can either purchase a meal or snack from the hospital or bring lunch with you.

Are there any risks?

We ensure that the amount of radiation you receive is as small as possible. It is similar to the natural radiation you would receive from living in Cornwall for 4 to 16 months. Radio-activity is eliminated from your body very quickly and allergic reactions are very rare.

Should I take any precautions?

Yes. Please avoid non-essential contact with children or pregnant women for the rest of the day.

If a family member or friend usually helps you (the patient) with any personal care, please be aware that they may receive a very small exposure to radiation in the 24 hours after your scan. This radiation exposure is usually no greater than the natural, background radiation that would be received from spending a couple of weeks in Cornwall. The person who helps you will need to be informed of this exposure and agree to help you around the time of your examination. Please call nuclear medicine on 01872 252230 to discuss this with our staff.

Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, but please do not bring pregnant women or children unless they are the patient.

When will I get my results?

We are unable to give you the results of your scan on the day you attend.

Where can I park?

Parking is in the pay and display car parks. There are 'dropping off' points and parking for the disabled near the main entrances. Please allow plenty of time when coming for your appointment.

We recommend the Park and Ride service at Langarth (West Truro) and Tregurra (East Truro) which operates a frequent bus service to the Hospital.

www.cornwall.gov.uk/parkfortruro

Where is the Nuclear Medicine department?

We are located in the basement of the Tower Block. On reaching the basement follow the signs to Nuclear Medicine, which is at the end of the corridor past Medical Physics.

Contact us

If you have any queries or need any further information, please contact the Nuclear Medicine department on 01872 252330.

If for any reason you cannot attend, please inform us so that another patient can have your appointment.

Please note that the Royal Cornwall Hospital is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted inside the hospital or on the grounds at any time.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

