



Royal Cornwall Hospitals
NHS Trust

Static kidney scan (DMSA)



One + all | we care

Who is this leaflet for?

Your doctor would like you to have a nuclear medicine kidney 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 static kidney scan?

Also known as a DMSA scan, this is a sensitive test that looks at the structure of your kidneys. It provides information about the size, shape and position of your kidneys, and whether there are any scars on them from a previous infection.

Are there any alternatives?

You could have an ultrasound scan, however this tells us more about the structure of your kidneys than how they are working. You may need an ultrasound scan as well as your static kidney 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 and keep taking any prescribed medication.

Please can all parents/guardians of patients under the age of 16, contact the department (01872 252330) with the date of the patients last urinary infection.

What will happen?

When you arrive in the department you will be given a small injection of a radioactive tracer

into a vein. It is very unlikely that you will have any side effects from this. After the injection you will be able to leave the department and return 3-4 hours later for your scan. Your radiographer/technologist will discuss the return time with you.

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.

How is the scan performed?

You will be asked to lie still on a bed for about 30 minutes, while the radiographer/technologist takes pictures. The camera will be positioned underneath you, but you will not usually have to remove any clothing.

For a general overview of the scan, please visit:
www.bnms.org.uk/page/DMSAKidneyScan

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 you have any mobility problems, 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.

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 1 month.

Radioactivity is eliminated from your body very quickly and allergic reactions are very rare.

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.

Do I need to take any precautions?

No.

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. We will send a report to the doctor who asked us to do the scan and your referring doctor, who will contact you.

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

