

Lung scan



Who is this leaflet for?

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

This is a sensitive test that provides useful information about the blood supply to your lungs. This will help your doctor understand your illness.

Please note the radioactive tracer used for this examination contains human blood products.

Are there any alternatives?

A CT Scan may be used.

Do I need to prepare for it?

No, but we advise you to wear loose and comfortable clothing. You can eat and drink normally.

What will happen?

Please arrive at the time stated in your appointment letter. When you arrive, you may first be sent for a chest X-ray, although this is not always needed.

For the scan, you will be given a small injection into a vein in your arm. It is very unlikely that you will have any side effects from this injection. You will be scanned around five minutes later.

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.

How is the scan performed?

You will be asked to lie on a couch for your scan which could take about 45 minutes. You may be asked to breathe through a tube but the radiographer/technologist will explain that to you at the time if it is required. The camera will be positioned close to you but patients do not normally feel claustrophobic.

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 56 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 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.

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.

What happens afterwards?

You can go home or back to work - in other words carry on as normal. You may eat and drink normally again and continue taking your prescribed medication.

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 two to fourteen months. Radioactivity is eliminated from your body very quickly and allergic reactions are very rare.

Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, but please do not bring pregnant individuals 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 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.

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

Please allow plenty of time when coming for your appointment.

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 the department so that another patient can have your appointment.

Further information

The following web site provides more information about your test, although techniques may vary from department to department:

www.bnms.org.uk/page/LungScan

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

