

## Imaging Patient Education

### What you should know about your Lung Scan, VQ Scan:

#### **Purpose:**

Nuclear Medicine uses small amounts of radioactive material to diagnose and sometimes treat disease. Nuclear Medicine procedures provide images that show how organs and tissues work. These procedures are noninvasive and very safe. More than 20 million Americans benefit each year from nuclear medicine procedures. This scan is performed to detect blood clots in the lungs.

#### **Preparation:**

- Chest x-ray within 24 hours of scan.

#### **Procedure:**

- You will be asked to verify your name, date of birth, and exam you will be having done.
- We will take a brief medical history.
- You will lie down for your exam with a camera above and below you. You will be made as comfortable as possible and asked to lie still during the exam. You will breathe in a small amount of radioactive gas through a mouthpiece or mask. There are no side effects from this gas. The technologist will take several images at different angles.
- After the first set of images, you will be injected with a small amount of radioactive material in a vein in the arm. There are no side effects from this injection.
- A second set of images will be taken using the same views as the first set.
- Approximate time for this procedure is 30 minutes.

#### **After the Test:**

- No reactions or special precautions.
- Your exam will be evaluated by a radiologist and the report will be sent to your physician.

#### **Risks and Benefits:**

The amount of radiation used in most nuclear medicine procedures is comparable to and often less than that of a diagnostic x-ray. Only small amounts of radioactive material are used and this material is quickly eliminated from the body. Side effects of nuclear medicine procedures are very rare. Nuclear medicine is generally not recommended for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

If you have questions or need additional information,  
please call the Nuclear Medicine Department: (717) 339-2027.