

Imaging Patient Education

What you should know about your I131 WB 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 for patients with a history of thyroid cancer to detect potential metastases.

Preparation:

- You will receive Thyrogen injections on two consecutive days at your doctor's office. Most likely this will occur on a Monday and Tuesday.
- You will be required to follow a low iodine diet for 1 week prior to your test

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 be asked to swallow a capsule containing a small amount of radioactive iodine. The capsule will be taken with water. You will return in 48 hours for your imaging. There are no side effects from this capsule.
- For your scan, you will be positioned on an imaging table on your back. You will be made as comfortable as possible and asked to lie still during the exam.
- The total length of time for this scan is approximately 1 hour.

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.