NHS
University Hospitals Sussex
NHS Foundation Trust

MAG3 Renogram

Department of Nuclear Medicine

Patient information

What is a MAG3 renogram?

A renogram is an examination which looks at the function of your kidneys. MAG3 is the chemical name of the radioactive substance we use to image the kidneys.

Can I have a MAG3 if I am pregnant?

If there is a possibility that you are pregnant, please inform the department before your appointment, as your appointment may need to be postponed.

Can I have a MAG3 Renogram scan if I am breastfeeding or chest/bottle-feeding?

Please inform the department before your appointment if you are currently breastfeeding or bottle-feeding your breastmilk to your child, or chestfeeding or bottle-feeding formula milk.

Can I have a MAG3 Renogram scan if I am on dialysis?

Please inform the department if you are on any form of dialysis, as it may be necessary to co-ordinate your nuclear medicine appointment with your dialysis treatment.

Can I bring someone with me?

Whenever possible, you should attend your appointment alone, unless you need a carer to support any additional needs. If you need a carer, or you provide care for someone else involving close contact, please inform the department before your appointment, as you may need to keep a distance of 1 metre from them for a few hours.

What will happen at my appointment?

Before attending for your appointment, you are required to drink plenty of fluid, to ensure you are well hydrated. It is not necessary to have a full bladder though, so empty your bladder as required.

Sometimes you may need to have a diuretic before the scan. A diuretic is a drug that makes your kidneys work harder and maximises kidney function. It is given by an injection into a vein, normally in your arm or the back of your hand. It may cause you to feel that you need to empty your bladder more frequently.

We then allow 15 minutes for this to start working before starting your scan. In this time you can use the toilet as required.

For your scan, you will be lying on the imaging bed with the gamma camera positioned below you (the upper camera head usually stays at a distance from you). You do not normally have to undress but we will ask you to remove any heavy or metal objects such a belt.

The radioactive liquid (MAG3) will then be injected into a vein in your arm or the back of the hand. This will not make you feel any different. The scan will be started immediately.

The scan takes about 25 minutes and it is important that you remain still for this time. We will then ask you to go and empty your bladder and when you return we will take another image for one minute.

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Sometimes it is necessary to take further images after 30 minutes, so please allow time when coming for your appointment.

If you have young children or pregnant friends/family please limit close contact with them for the rest of the day. You can be in the same room but avoid sitting close to each other for long periods.

What will happen after my appointment?

Eat as normal and keep well hydrated.

To protect other people from radiation, plan to keep a distance of at least 1 metre for a few hours. This is long enough for some of the radioactivity to decay and for your body to remove anything remaining. Brief close contact such as queuing or walking past others is safe. Remember to use good hygiene precautions during this time to prevent contamination.

When will I get my results?

The report will be sent to your referring doctor. They will contact you to discuss the results. If you have any enquiries regarding your results please contact the department where the referral was originally made.

Are there any risks?

The radioactive tracer administered will expose you to a small amount of ionising radiation, consistent with the desired diagnostic outcome. The risks are very low and the benefits of having the results from the MAG3 scan greatly outweigh the risk.

Contact details

Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH)
Nuclear Medicine Department
Phone 01273 523040 choose option 5

Princess Royal Hospital (PRH)
Imaging Department Nuclear Medicine Department
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This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath

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