



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Thyroid Scan

Department of Nuclear Medicine

Patient information

## What is a thyroid scan?

The thyroid scan looks at the function of your thyroid gland.

## Can I have a thyroid scan if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

If there is a possibility that you are pregnant or if you are currently breastfeeding please inform the department before your appointment as we will likely have to re-schedule.

## Can I bring someone with me?

Whenever possible, you should attend your appointment alone, unless you need a carer to support any additional needs.

## How long will my appointment take?

Your appointment will take 45 minutes.

## Do I need to stop my medication?

If you have had a CT scan with contrast or you are taking any of the following medication please contact the Nuclear Medicine Department.

- Thyroxine (T4)
- Amiodarone
- Iodine containing supplements
- Triiodothyronine (T3).

## What will happen at my appointment?

When you arrive for your appointment, you will firstly be given a small injection of a radioactive liquid into a vein, usually in your arm or the back of your hand. This injection should not have any effect on you, but will allow us to take images using a gamma camera. The radioactive tracer will emit gamma rays which will be detected by a piece of equipment called a gamma camera.

Following the injection there will be a delay of 15 minutes while the tracer accumulates in the thyroid. During this time you will be required to drink 2 cups of water in order to wash out any tracer from the salivary glands and oesophagus.

For your scan you will be required to lie still on your back on the imaging bed, with a gamma camera positioned above you, but open at both sides whilst 2 images will be acquired. This should take 10 minutes.



If you are having your thyroid scan as part of your parathyroid scan a SPECT (3-dimensional) image will be required around your neck. This should take 20 minutes.

All images will be checked before you leave the department. Occasionally images may be repeated or extra images acquired if necessary.

## **Do I need to undress for the scan?**

You will be asked to remove any metallic objects, such as a phone, keys and necklace. You may also be asked to change into a gown.

## **What happens after my appointment?**

After the appointment you can resume all usual activities. Eat as normal and keep well hydrated.

If you have young children or pregnant friends/family please limit close contact with them for 2 hours. You can be in the same room but avoid sitting close to each other for long periods. This is to avoid them receiving any unnecessary radiation exposure.

## 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 with this procedure?

The radioactive tracer administered will expose you to a small amount of ionising radiation.

The risks from this radiation are very low and the benefits of having the results from the thyroid scan greatly outweigh the risk.

## Contact details

### Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH)

#### Nuclear Medicine Department

Louisa Martindale Building,  
Royal Sussex County Hospital  
Eastern Road, Brighton BN2 5BE

**Telephone: 01273 523040 choose option 5**

### Princess Royal Hospital (PRH)

#### Imaging Department

Nuclear Medicine Department  
Lewes Road Haywards Heath  
West Sussex RH16 4EX

**This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath**

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