



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# MIBG Scan

Department of Nuclear Medicine

Patient information

## **What is a MIBG scan?**

The MIBG scan is mainly used to examine abnormalities in the adrenal glands, although the examination can be used to image abnormalities in other areas of the body as well.

## **Can I have a MIBG 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?**

The examination is carried out over 2 days. The first day will take 6 hours but you can leave the department for 4 hours after the injection. The second day will take 2 hours. Please see page 3 'What will happen at my appointment'.

## **What happens before my appointment?**

It is very important that you do not eat or drink anything containing caffeine, including decaffeinated drinks, 24 hours before your appointment. We can't perform the test if you have.

## **Do I need to stop my medication?**

It is important you complete and return the enclosed form. Please list all medication that you are taking including over the counter drugs. Some drugs need to be stopped before your appointment.

## **What will happen at my first appointment?**

At your first appointment we will give you two tablets to swallow called Potassium Iodide. These tablets will stop the radioactive tracer entering the thyroid.

One hour after you take these tablets, a cannula will be placed, usually into a vein in your arm or the back of your hand, where the radioactive MIBG is injected. It will emit gamma rays which will be detected by a piece of equipment called a gamma camera. Your blood pressure will be monitored before and after the injection.

We have to allow a minimum of four hours delay for this injection to work. You may leave the department during this time and can eat and drink (except food/drinks with caffeine).

When you return for your scan you will be required to lie still on your back on the imaging bed, with a gamma camera positioned above and below you, but open at both sides.

The camera will start over your head and slowly move down your body (whole body scan) which will take about 45 minutes. It is important that you remain as still as possible, while relaxed and breathing normally.

## What will happen at my second appointment?

At your second appointment you are required to lie on the imaging bed for 2 sets of imaging. The first set of imaging is a whole body scan and takes 45 minutes and the second set of imaging is a SPECT/CT, where we do a 3-dimensional (3D) image of a specific area of your body and it can take 30 minutes to one hour. It is important that you remain as still as possible.



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, belts, keys, underwire bra, coins or zips. 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 until the following day. 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 MIBG scan greatly outweigh the risk.

## Contact details

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

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