



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# DaTSCAN

Department of Nuclear Medicine

Patient information

## What is a DaTSCAN?

DaTSCAN is a brain scan to diagnose Parkinson's disease. It involves an injection into your arm of a radioactive substance called DaTSCAN, which is taken up into various parts of the brain. It emits gamma rays which will be detected by a piece of equipment called a gamma camera. Depending on how it is distributed, we can differentiate Parkinson's syndromes with Essential tremor or Lewy body dementia with Alzheimer's disease.

If you have an iodine allergy please inform the department. Please bring your medications list.

## Can I have a DaTSCAN 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?

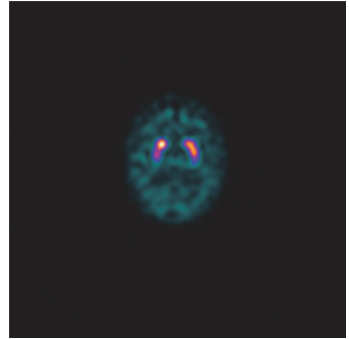
Whenever possible, you should attend your appointment alone, unless you need a carer to support any additional needs.

## What will happen at my appointment?

Firstly, we will give you two tablets to swallow called Potassium Iodide. These tablets will stop the DaTSCAN entering the thyroid.

One hour after you take these tablets, the radioactive DaTSCAN is injected into a suitable vein, usually into your arm or the back of your hand.

We have to allow a minimum of three hours delay for this injection to work. You may leave the department during this time and can eat and drink normally.



The scan will take 45 minutes. You will be required to lie still on an imaging bed with your head supported in a special head rest. We may use straps to keep your head still. We will then take a series of images around your head.

## **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 the rest of the 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, consistent with the desired diagnostic outcome.

The risks are very low and the benefits of having the results from the DaTSCAN greatly outweigh the risk.

## Contact details

**Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH)**

**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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