

Fact sheet

Bone Scan

A radionuclide Bone scan provides functional images of the skeleton and is a highly sensitive technique for the diagnosis of bone disorders.

Procedure:

The scan requires an injection of a small amount of radioactive substance ('tracer') into a vein. The tracer travels to the bones via the blood stream.

The amount of radiation involved is very low. The tracer is non-toxic and will not cause nausea, hot flushes or drowsiness.

A small plastic tube (cannula) is inserted into a vein and will be used for the injection. For some age groups the tube is taped in place and an arm board and bandage used to keep it secure.

When the tracer is first given some 'initial' images will be taken. This gives us information about blood supply to the bones.

The tracer takes time to concentrate in the bone, therefore there is a delay of at least 60 minutes before the 'delayed' images can be taken. You are not required to stay in the department for the whole time.

Your child will be required to keep very still for the images. We therefore position and gently secure the patient to the scanning table before commencing the study.

The 'initial' images usually take about 10 minutes to complete. The 'delayed' images usually take about 60 minutes to complete.

After the scan, the technologist will process the images.

We like parents or caregivers to stay during the scan as children are usually more cooperative and less apprehensive when a loved one is with them. However, the number of people present during the scan must be kept to a minimum. Other children can't be allowed into the procedure room. Please make alternative arrangements for their care during the procedure. Children up to 10 years old may be cared for in the WCH crèche.

Pregnancy / Breast feeding:

Any person either having a Nuclear Medicine scan, or staying with a child during a scan, must inform the Nuclear Medicine staff if they are, or think they might be pregnant.

If you are having a Nuclear Medicine scan and are breastfeeding, please contact

Nuclear Medicine staff prior to attending for your appointment.

Results:

The Bone scan results will be sent to your child's referring doctor.

Patient Preparation:

Please be sure to follow instructions carefully to avoid having to rebook the scan.

(1) **AnGel Cream**- An anaesthetic cream (AnGel) can be used for children aged 1 month and over. The AnGel cream will numb the skin to help take the "ouch" out of the injection. Please arrive 1 hour before injection time for cream application.

(2) Different patient preparation is required for different age groups.

Children aged over 3 years eat and drink as normal.

Children aged 6 months to 3 years will need sedation to obtain accurate images. For sedation to be administered safely your child must be fasted properly. Your child must fast from solids (including milk /formula) for 5 and 1/2 hours before the injection time, and fast from clear fluids for 1 and 1/2 hours before injection time.

Children aged less than 6 months will need to fast completely for 3 and 1/2 hours before injection time. This age group is fed and settled just before images are to be taken

Patient Identification:

Patient identification is an important step to ensure your child always receives the right care. You will be asked to state your child's name and date of birth several times during the Nuclear Medicine study.

If your child is unwell, or you are unable to attend your appointment please contact the Nuclear Medicine Department on 8161 6020.