

# Parathyroid Scan

Read this information to learn:

- what a parathyroid scan is
- how to prepare
- what to expect
- who to call if you have any questions

## Your parathyroid scan is scheduled for:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: Step 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Toronto General Hospital  
585 University Avenue  
Medical Imaging Reception  
Peter Munk Building – 1st floor



## **What is a parathyroid scan?**

A parathyroid scan is a nuclear medicine test. The parathyroid is a gland in the thyroid gland in your neck. It controls how your body breaks down and uses calcium.

## **Why do I need this test?**

A parathyroid scan lets your doctor have a closer look at your parathyroid to check if it is overactive or has a tumour.

## **How do nuclear medicine tests work?**

Nuclear medicine tests are different from x-rays. X-rays show what your body looks like. Nuclear medicine tests show how your body and organs are working. They can help find problems that other tests can't find.

Before a nuclear medicine test, you are given a medicine called a radiopharmaceutical (also called radioactive tracer). A radiopharmaceutical is radioactive. This means it gives off energy.

The radioactive tracer is usually given through an intravenous (IV) line placed in a vein. But it can also be:

- swallowed
- or
- breathed in through the lungs

The tracer travels to the part of the body that your doctor wants to see. When it reaches the right area, we take pictures. We use a special machine called a gamma camera. It takes pictures of the energy coming from the tracer.

## How do I prepare for the test?

- ✓ Check in at the Medical Imaging reception area (University Avenue entrance, across from the pharmacy) 15 minutes before your appointment.
- ✓ Remember to bring your health card (OHIP). If you do not have an OHIP card, please bring another form of government-issued photo ID (such as a driver's license, passport, or other provincial health card).
- ✓ If you haven't registered, come to Toronto General Hospital 30 minutes before your appointment. Go to Patient Registration on the Ground floor near the Elizabeth Street entrance.

**Important:** If there is any chance that you're pregnant, tell the technologist before they give you the radioactive tracer.

If you are breastfeeding or chestfeeding, please talk with your technologist for more instructions.

## What can I expect?

There are 2 steps to this test.

### Step 1:

1. A nuclear medicine doctor or technologist injects a small amount of radioactive tracer into your vein.
2. 10 minutes after you are injected, you lie on a scan bed and a technologist takes pictures of your body. This takes about 1 hour.
3. After these pictures are done, you leave and come back in 3 hours.

### Step 2:

1. You are injected again with a different radioactive tracer that goes into your thyroid gland.
2. The technologist takes more pictures. This takes about 1 hour.

## **Are there any side effects?**

There are no known side effects from this test.

You can go back to your usual activities once the test is over. We will send a report to your doctor.

## **Who can I call if I have any questions?**

Please call the nuclear medicine department at 416 340 3311 to cancel or reschedule your appointment or to ask any questions.

The nuclear medicine department is on the 1st floor of Toronto General Hospital, EB1 – 410, near the Eaton elevators.



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