

# Thyroid Uptake and Scan

Read this information to learn:

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

**Your thyroid uptake and scan is scheduled for:**

**Appointment 1**

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

**Appointment 2**

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

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



## **What is a thyroid uptake and scan?**

A thyroid uptake and scan are nuclear medicine tests. A thyroid uptake measures how active your thyroid gland is.

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

The scan shows the size and shape of your gland and whether there are any nodules (lumps).

Depending on the information your doctor needs, they may only order the uptake or the scan (not both).

## **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). But it can also be:

- swallowed
- breathe in through the lungs

The tracer travels to the part of your body that your doctor wants to see. When it reaches the right area, we take pictures of you. 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?

You may need to stop taking some medicines or stop eating certain foods for a week or more before your appointment.

Use this chart to find out when to stop certain medicines or food before your appointment.

<b>Medicine or food</b>	<b>How many weeks before your appointment to stop:</b>
Seaweed or kelp	4 weeks
Cough medicines	2 weeks
S. S.KI	2 weeks
Lugol's Solution	2 weeks
Contrast (CT)	6 weeks
Antihistamines	1 week
Corticosteroids	1 week
Betadine/Surgery	3 weeks
Amiodarone (Anti-arrhythmic)	6 months
<b>Antithyroid Medicines:</b>	
PTU	1 week
Tapazole	3 to 5 days
Methimazole	1 week
Perchlorate	1 week
<b>Thyroid Medicines:</b>	
Thyroxine (T4)	4 weeks
Triiodothyronine (T3)	2 weeks

You don't have to stop eating seafood or taking multivitamins and minerals before your appointment.

- **Do NOT eat or drink anything for 4 hours before your appointment.**
- Bring a list of the medicines you are taking to 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).
- Check in at Medical Imaging reception 15 minutes **before** your appointment.

**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?**

1. For the uptake, we will give you a pill to swallow that has a small amount of radioactive iodine in it.
2. After 2 hours and again after 24 hours, we will use a probe to measure your thyroid gland. This will take about 5 minutes each time.
3. After your 24 hour uptake, you will lie on a bed. We will inject a small amount of a different radiopharmaceutical in your vein.
4. We will use a gamma camera to take pictures of you. This will take about 5 minutes.
5. After 20 to 30 minutes, we will take more pictures. These pictures will take about 30 minutes.

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

There are no known side effects from this test. You can go back to your normal 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.



## **Have feedback about this document?**

Please fill out our survey. Use this link: [bit.ly/uhn-pe](https://bit.ly/uhn-pe)

Visit [www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca) for more health information. Contact [pfep@uhn.ca](mailto:pfep@uhn.ca) to request this brochure in a different format, such as large print or electronic formats.

© 2021 University Health Network. All rights reserved. Use this material for your information only. It does not replace advice from your doctor or other health care professional. Do not use this information for diagnosis or treatment. Ask your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition. You may print 1 copy of this brochure for non-commercial and personal use only.