

Lung Scan

Nuclear Medicine Department

Patient Information Leaflet

What is a Lung Scan?

The purpose of a lung scan is to look at the blood supply to your lungs.

This enables the doctor to see if you have any small blood clots in your lungs.

When you attend for your appointment we will give you an injection of a small amount of a radioactive tracer. You will be lying down for this injection.

The tracer will go to your lungs and will not make you feel any different; there are no side effects.

We will then take pictures using a special camera which will show the blood supply to your lungs.

The whole procedure should take no more than 20 minutes.

Occasionally we may need to carry out a scan to look at the air flow to your lungs. If we need to do this we will let you know.

We would carry out this scan the following day if it was needed.

Why do I need a Lung Scan?

One of the causes of chest pain or breathlessness is the presence of blood clots in the lungs, called Pulmonary Embolism.

During pregnancy, this condition is more likely to occur although still very rare.

A lung scan can detect the presence of blood clots.

The result of the lung scan will allow your doctor to give you the correct treatment.

Does my baby receive a radiation dose from this test?

Your baby will receive a very small dose of radiation from the radioactive tracer injected into your body. To keep this dose as low as possible we only inject half the amount of tracer usually given to adults.

The radiation dose received by your baby is very low – at least ten times smaller than the radiation dose we all receive each year from natural background radiation in the UK.

Is there a risk to my baby from this radiation?

There is a small risk to your baby from having this procedure. However, we always use the smallest amount of radiation possible to do the test, so the risk to your baby is very low.

It may be more harmful to your baby if you do not have the test and do not receive appropriate treatment as a result.

Can I do anything to reduce the radiation dose my baby receives?

Drink plenty of fluids and empty your bladder more frequently than normal.

It is vital that you understand why the test is being done and that you feel it is in your baby's best interests. Please feel free to discuss this with a member of staff.

Do I need to prepare for the scan?

You will be able to eat and drink as normal on the day of your scan.

There is no need to get undressed for the scan but please remove any metal items from shirt pockets or any necklaces with large pendants. There is no need to stop any of your medication prior to your scan. The injection will not react with any other medications.

Do I need to do anything special after the scan?

After your scan you can eat and drink normally and you will still be able to drive a car. The radioactivity will disappear naturally from your body and will be gone within 24 hours.

Please tell us if you are currently breastfeeding another child.

How will I get the results of my scan?

The results will be sent to the hospital consultant who referred you for the scan.

If you are an in-patient, a report will be generated as soon as possible after the scan.

Some doctors will write to you with the results of the scan and some will send you an appointment to come back to the outpatient clinic.

How safe is the injection?

The injection contains a small amount of radioactive tracer which emits gamma rays (these are similar to X-rays). We use the smallest dose possible to provide as much information as we can about your condition.

The radiation dose is very low and is similar to the natural background radiation we all receive from the environment over a period of 10 weeks.

The results of your scan will give your doctor useful information about your condition and will help them to plan your treatment.

The benefits of having the scan far outweigh the small radiation dose you will receive.

Further guidance has been published by Public Health England

Visit website -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ionising-radiation-from-medical-imaging-examinations-safety-advice/exposure-to-ionising-radiation-from-medical-imaging-safety-advice>

Alternatively, use an internet search engine to search for “PHE medical imaging ionising radiation”.

The injection contains a product called Human Albumin which comes from screened blood donations. The injection is safe but if you have any objections to receiving a product of this nature please let us know.

Additional Information

Directions to X-ray Central

X-ray Central is situated in area 4 which is off the main hospital corridor and is signposted. Please follow the signs for X-Ray Central and report to reception on arrival.

Relatives and escorts

If you require support during your appointment you may bring one accompanying adult with you.

They will not usually be allowed into the examination room. If you have any additional needs, please let us know prior to your appointment.

Car Park

Car parking is in the multi-storey car park at the main entrance of the hospital. Car park charges apply at this hospital. Please bring change with you if you are planning to park on site. You can pay via debit/credit card at the multi-storey carpark.

Other facilities available

At the main entrance to the hospital there is a cafe and shops selling light meals and snacks. There is also a large restaurant for staff and visitors to use.

Other sources of information:



Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Telephone: **01253 956789**



Hospital switchboard

Telephone: **01253 300000**

Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives.



You can contact them via tel: **01253 955589**
or by email: **bfwh.patientrelations@nhs.net**



Further information is available on our website:
www.bfwh.nhs.uk

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this booklet then please call: **01253 955520**



01253 955520

Author: Elizabeth Millington
Approved by: Radiology Policy meeting
Date of Publication: 24/03/2022

Reference No: PL/1003 v3
Review Date: 01/03/2025