

Patient information leaflet**Lung scan ventilation and perfusion (VQ) scan**Radiology department

Introduction

We hope this guide will answer your questions about your lung scan examination. Please contact the team if you require further information via the details at the end of this leaflet.

What is a lung scan?

This scan is a test in which a small amount of radioactivity is used to obtain pictures of your lungs. This scan is done in two parts.

The first part is to look at the air supply to your lungs, this is the ventilation part. The second part is to look at the blood flow to your lungs. This is the perfusion part.

Why do I need a lung scan?

You are having this examination as it will help your doctor to decide on the cause of your symptoms. This procedure will give clearer information to the clinicians treating you.

What are the associated risks?

The amount of radioactive tracer (a radioactive solution or gas often known as radiotracer or radioactive isotope) used to take the pictures is very small and the radioactivity is short-lived. The risk is outweighed by the benefit from the information that is gained by having the scan. A doctor will have checked the request to make sure this is the optimal test before we contact you.

Both parts of this procedure involve receiving a dose of a radioactive tracer, this does not have any known side effects and does not make you feel drowsy.

Preparing for your procedure

There are no special preparations before your lung scan. You can eat and drink as you normally would.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant, or are breastfeeding, please tell the radiographer **before** your appointment date, as we may need to postpone the scan or give special instructions with regard to breastfeeding.

Medication

Please continue to take all medications as usual prior to your lung scan.

Getting to us

The Princess Alexandra Hospital (Hamstel Road, Harlow, Essex, CM20 1QX), follow the signage to the radiology reception, which is located on the ground floor, green zone. Please let the receptionists know that you have arrived for your appointment.



When should I arrive?

Please arrive in the radiology department at the time arranged with the nuclear medicine department when booking your appointment.

You may receive an appointment letter in the post and this may be followed up with a text confirmation.

Can someone stay with me in the hospital?

You are able to have a friend or relative attend with you, as long as they are not young children or pregnant; however, due to ionising radiation regulations, only patients are allowed in the scanning room.

Children are not allowed in the waiting area unattended. Our staff are not permitted to supervise children, so please ensure child care arrangements are in place to avoid your tests being rescheduled.

The day of the procedure

A member of the nuclear medicine team will collect you from the waiting area and bring you into our preparation room, where they will explain the procedure to you and answer any questions you may have.

Once this has been discussed a cannula will then be placed in your arm or hand in preparation for the injection part of the scan.

The procedure

Ventilation – (part one)

A special machine is used to generate radioactive air. This involves you breathing in and out through a tube which is attached to this machine for three or four breaths, whilst wearing a nose clip.

We then take you into the scanning room where you will be asked to lie flat on your back, and a piece of equipment which takes the pictures (a gamma camera) will be positioned above and below your chest, in order for the radiographer to start taking pictures of your lungs.

The radiographer will take three sets of pictures, which involves the camera moving around you. You may be asked to raise your arms above your head for a couple of these pictures.

Perfusion – (part two)

Whilst remaining in the same position, the radiographer will then inject a small amount of radioactivity through the cannula to show the blood supply to the lungs.

You will be asked to take some deep breaths whilst the injection is taking place. Then the same three sets of pictures will be performed again.

After the procedure

After your scan is performed, your cannula will be removed before you leave the department.

You can eat, drink as normal and go where you wish. Please avoid close contact with children and pregnant women for the rest of the day. Close contact means having a child sit next to you for more than half an hour. This is to avoid exposing children to unnecessary radiation.

Please continue drinking more than usual to help clear the radiation from your body.



When will I get my results?

You will not know the results of your examination immediately. The radiologist will report their findings to the clinician who arranged your procedure, who will discuss the results with you.

Can I drive after my procedure?

You are able to drive as soon as you are discharged from the department.

How soon can I return to work?

This decision will need to be made by your referring doctor after they have received your results. It will be dependent on the results of your scan and your health condition that determined the need for the scan.

If you attended as an outpatient and feel well enough, we advise you can return to work the following day.

Contacting the team

If you have any further questions, please contact the nuclear medicine team on; **01279 827120**, from **Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm**.

There is an answerphone available outside of these hours. Please leave a message and a member of the team will contact you.

Your feedback matters

If you would like to give feedback on your care, please contact our patient experience team at paht.pals@nhs.net or **01279 827211**.

Please contact the communications team at paht.communications@nhs.net if you would like this leaflet in another language or format.

