

Thyroid Scan Technetium

A thyroid scan shows the size and shape of your thyroid using a radioactive tracer. The amount of radiation used in this test is small and well within limits that are not harmful. The exam is done in the Nuclear Medicine department and lasts about 2 hours.

Before the Test

There is no preparation needed for this test.

On the day of the test, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test
- Medical insurance information
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 E. Huron, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions; 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24 hour desk near the Superior entrance).

During the Test

When you arrive in the Nuclear Medicine department, a doctor or nurse will ask you questions about your medical history. If you think you are pregnant or if you are breastfeeding, please tell the technologist (tech) before the test.

A radioactive tracer will be injected into your vein. You will wait 20 minutes to allow the tracer to get into the thyroid gland. Then, after you drink an 8-ounce glass of water, the tech will assist you to lie on your back on an imaging table, under a special camera. The camera will be close to your neck as 4 pictures of your thyroid are taken. A doctor will review your pictures.

If there is a chance you could be pregnant please tell the tech.

In most cases, extra images are taken to obtain more detailed information. Once the needed images are taken, the test is complete.

After the Test

You may resume your normal activities and diet after the test. The tracer you were given is not harmful and will become non-radioactive within a few days. The test results are sent to your doctor within 5 business days of the exam.

If you have any questions about this test please call the Nuclear Medicine department at 312-926-2514, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

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Developed by: Department of Nuclear Medicine

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For more information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit www.nmh.org.

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