

A PATIENT'S GUIDE TO A BONE SCAN



What is the purpose of the Bone Scan?

The most common reasons for performing a Bone Scan is to detect areas of abnormal bone growth due to fractures, tumours, infection, or other bone diseases. The radiopharmaceutical most commonly used is ^{99m}Tc -Medronate (MDP). MDP is injected into a vein, usually in the arm, where it is transported by the bloodstream to the bones.

What happens when I arrive in the Nuclear Medicine Department?

On the day of the exam, you will check in at the Nuclear Medicine Department. A Nuclear Medicine Technologist will explain to you their Bone Scan procedure. You may also be asked several important questions about your health. What happens, in most cases, is that an injection of a small amount of radiopharmaceutical called ^{99m}Tc -Medronate (MDP) will be injected into one of your veins (usually in your arm).

What happens after my injection?

Pictures of the blood supply going to your bones may or may not be taken immediately after the injection. After the injection, there is a delay of a few hours. This delay is necessary to allow the material to accumulate into your bones. The delay will vary from department to department. You will be told at what time to return for further pictures by the Technologist. The length of time spent in the department when you return varies for each hospital. Ask your Technologist approximately how long you can expect to be when you return for the second part of your Bone Scan.

What do I have to do to prepare for the test?

There is no preparation prior to having a Bone Scan. You may continue to eat and drink normally prior to, and after the Scan. If you are on any medications, you may continue to take them. Drinking plenty of fluids before and after the injection of the MDP often helps to give better pictures of your bones. It is also recommended that you void frequently following injection.

How safe is the Bone Scan?

Any diagnostic procedure may have some risks, and you should consult your physician regarding the risks and benefits of this procedure. ^{99m}Tc-Medronate (MDP) causes minimal side effects. The test and material are used routinely worldwide under physician supervision.

What happens when I return to the Nuclear Medicine Department for the second part?

When you come back, empty your bladder before your Scan. The Technologist will position you on a bed under a machine called a Gamma camera. The camera may or may not pass over you. The Scan time will vary depending on what your doctor is looking for. Plan to be in the department anywhere from 30-60 minutes.

Following the procedure

If you are an inpatient, you will be returned to your hospital room. If you are an outpatient, you may go home and continue your regular activities.

When will I get the results of my exam?

A report describing the findings of your Bone Scan will be sent to your physician. You should make an appointment to see your referring doctor to obtain the results of your test.

Who can answer any other questions I might have?

Your personal physician, or a physician, nurse, or Technologist in the Nuclear Medicine Department.

***This information is not a substitute for an informed discussion between you and your physician.
Consult your physician if you need more information on the procedures and drugs used in this pamphlet.***

Your exam will take place:

Location: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Phone: _____

ReturnTime: _____

Instructions: _____

If you require further information about your test or wish to change your appointment, please call the phone number listed above.

This information has been kindly provided by:

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