Renal Scan with Blood Glomerular Filtration Rate (GFR)

Information for patients and families

Read this information to learn:

• what a renal scan with GFR is
• how to prepare
• what to expect
• who to call if you have any questions

Your renal scan with GFR has been scheduled for:

Date: ____________________________

Time: ____________________________

Toronto General Hospital
585 University Avenue
Medical Imaging Reception
Peter Munk Building – 1st floor
What is a renal scan with GFR?

A renal scan with GFR is a nuclear medicine test. A renal scan shows how your blood flows to your kidney and compares how your right and left kidneys are working. How well your blood flows through your kidneys is called the glomerular filtration rate or GFR.

To give us an idea of your GFR, we will need to take a blood sample from you when we start the test. We also take a sample 1 hour after you are injected with a radioactive tracer and again 3 hours after.

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.

Before a nuclear medicine test, something called a radiopharmaceutical is put in your body. A radiopharmaceutical is radioactive. This means it gives off energy. To get the radiopharmaceutical in your body, you will:

- swallow it
- breathe it in
- or get an injection (a needle)

It will travel to the part of your body that your doctor wants to see. When it reaches the right area, we will take pictures of you. We will use a special machine called a gamma camera. It takes pictures of the energy coming from the radiopharmaceutical (also called radioactive tracer).

Nuclear medicine tests can help find problems that other tests can’t find.
How do I prepare for the test?

- Bring a complete list of all the medicines you are taking.
- Check in at the Medical Imaging reception area (University Avenue entrance, across from the pharmacy) **15 minutes before 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).

If you haven’t registered, come to Toronto General Hospital 30 minutes before your appointment. Go to Patient Registration on the Ground floor near the Elizabeth Street entrance.

For women:

If there is any chance that you are pregnant, **tell the technologist before they give you the radioactive tracer.**

**You will need to stop breastfeeding for 24 hours after this test.**
Tell the technologist if you are breastfeeding.

What can I expect?

1. A technologist weighs you and takes your height.
2. We ask you to drink 3 to 4 glasses of water in 20 minutes. You can empty your bladder any time you want during that time.
3. We take a sample of your blood.
4. You lie down on a scan bed and we inject a small amount of radioactive tracer into a vein in your arm or hand.
5. The scan starts right after you are injected. It takes about 20 minutes.

6. We ask you to empty your bladder and return for 2 more images (pictures). This takes about 5 minutes.

7. One hour after you are injected, the technologist takes another sample of your blood. You can get up and walk around after they take this sample.

8. 3 hours after you are injected, the technologist takes another sample of blood. After that you can go home.

**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?**

If you have any questions or concerns or if you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment, please contact the nuclear medicine department at 416 340 3311.

The nuclear medicine department is on the 1st floor of Toronto General Hospital, EB1 – 410, near the Eaton elevators.