White Blood Cell Scan

Information for patients and families

Read this information to learn:

• what a white blood cell scan is
• how to prepare
• what to expect
• who to call if you have any questions

Your white blood cell scan has been scheduled for:

Date: __________________________

Time: __________________________

Toronto General Hospital
585 University Avenue
Medical Imaging Reception
Peter Munk Building – 1st floor
What is a white blood cell scan?

A white blood cell scan is a nuclear medicine test. It checks if an area or areas in your body are infected.

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?

☑ 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.

If you are breastfeeding, talk to your technologist for more instructions.

What can I expect?

1. A technologist uses a needle to take out 50 millilitres of your blood and gives it to the radiopharmacy. This is a special kind of pharmacy that works with radioactive medicines.

2. At the radiopharmacy, they separate your white blood cells from the rest of your blood and make them radioactive.

3. After about 2 hours, the technologist injects the white blood cells back into your vein and begins to take pictures of your body.

4. You will need to come back 4 hours and 24 hours after you are injected for more sets of pictures. The technologist will give you the times you need to return.

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.