

Nuclear medicine department

# Information about your renogram

## What is a renogram?

A renogram allows us to look at how well each kidney is working. For this scan we will give you an injection containing a small amount of a radioactive substance called a tracer. This goes round in the bloodstream and is carried to the kidneys. It is then extracted by the kidneys, in a similar way to how urine is produced, so that it accumulates in the bladder. The gamma camera can detect the radiation coming from the tracer in the kidneys, the tubes leading from the kidneys to the bladder (the ureters) and the bladder itself.

## Is there any preparation for my renogram

- Please continue to eat and drink normally, and continue to take your usual medication.
- During the hour before your scan, you should drink 2 to 3 cups of any fluid, to make sure that you are well hydrated.
- Please allow plenty of time to get to your appointment, as the tracer is individually ordered for you and scans cannot normally be delayed.
- You should expect to be in the department for about one hour.
- Please do not bring along anyone who is pregnant or under 18 years of age.
- **You must tell us in advance if you know you are (or think that you may be) pregnant, or are breastfeeding.**

## What happens during my renogram?

Our staff will explain the procedure to you fully when you arrive for your appointment.

- You will not be asked to undress. You may be asked to remove metal objects.
- We will ask you to sit upright with your back against the scanner. You will then be given an injection of a radioactive tracer, usually in your arm or hand. The scan is performed straight away so there is no need to wait.
- The needle will be left in your vein until the test is complete, as in most cases you will be given a diuretic injection about halfway through the test. This diuretic makes your kidneys produce more urine and allows us to see your kidneys drain.



- We will make sure you are as comfortable as possible for the scan, as it is extremely important that you remain as still as you can.
- The scan lasts up to 40 minutes.

### **Will I feel anything during my scan?**

- The injection feels similar to having blood taken. There are no side effects from the radioactive injection. It will not make you feel sleepy or affect your ability to drive.
- Having the pictures taken will not hurt, but if you are in a lot of pain or find it difficult to keep still, please tell us.
- If you are given the diuretic, you may feel that you need to pass urine urgently during the scan, and you will want to pass urine more frequently for the next few hours.

### **What happens after the renogram?**

Once we have checked the technical quality of your scan and are happy we have all the information we need, you will be able to leave the department.

You should continue to drink plenty of fluid for the rest of the day and empty your bladder regularly. This is to keep you well hydrated and to wash out the tracer from your body more quickly.

You may eat normally.

A radiologist will send a report of the scan results to the consultant who referred you. We will not be able to give you any results on the day.

### **How safe is the examination?**

There are small risks associated with the radioactive tracer that you have been given. However, the images give the doctors important information about your condition that helps in your treatment. The benefits of the information from the scan outweigh the small risks of exposure to radiation.

As is possible with all medication, a small number of people may be allergic to the diuretic, although this is rare. Please tell the staff attending you if you have any allergies.

### **What are the benefits of a renogram?**

This scan gives an accurate and reproducible means of measuring and monitoring the function of your kidneys.

Initially it allows the doctors looking after you to establish a base line function of your kidneys and to check for any pre-existing problems that you may have. It may then be repeated periodically to monitor the effects of treatment and surgery.

### **What happens if I decide not to have the renogram?**

If you decide not to have the test, then please discuss this with the doctor looking after you.

### **What happens if I cannot keep my appointment?**

If you cannot keep your appointment, contact the nuclear medicine department as soon as possible, so that we can offer the appointment to someone else and make you a new appointment.

Please attend promptly at the time shown on the attached appointment letter.

If you have any questions about this appointment, or any queries about the examination, please telephone the number below:

Tel: 0161 446 3942/6

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact [patient.information@christie.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@christie.nhs.uk)

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for  
urgent support and specialist advice  
**The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658**  
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

