

## Nuclear Medicine Gastric Emptying Scan (Liquid)

Your doctor would like you to have a Nuclear Medicine scan and has arranged for you to visit our department. We would like your visit to be as pleasant as possible and hope this leaflet will answer some of the questions you may have. Should you have any questions regarding your appointment please contact us on one of the telephone numbers below between 9:00am and 5.00pm Monday- Friday.

0300 131 4797 or 0300 131 5853

### WHAT IS A GASTRIC EMPTYING SCAN?

The test is to look at how your stomach empties after a liquid meal. We do this by adding a small amount of radioactivity to either a drink of fruit juice or a standard feed if you have a feeding tube in place. Images are taken using a Gamma Camera. The pictures will help your doctor understand your illness.

### IS THE SCAN SAFE?

The amount of radiation you receive is as small as possible and is similar to other X-ray procedures. The radioactivity leaves the body very quickly and it will not make you feel sick or sleepy.

### DO I NEED TO PREPARE FOR THE SCAN?

No food or drink and stop smoking (if this applies to you) for at least 4 hours prior to your test.

You will also need to stop medications that could affect gastric emptying for 48 hours: these include certain painkillers (opiates, including co-codamol), anticholinergics and tricyclic antidepressants.

**Please contact us on the appropriate number at the top of this leaflet to discuss all of your medication.**

### IS THERE ANYTHING I SHOULD TELL THE STAFF BEFORE THE SCAN?

Women should tell us if they are pregnant, if they think they may be pregnant or if they are breast-feeding. Women between the ages of 12 and 60 will be asked to sign a form on the day of their test to confirm they are not pregnant. If there is any doubt, then by law we have to perform a pregnancy test before we can do your test.

### WHAT IS INVOLVED?

Shortly after you arrive, you will be given the drink, or a feed via your feeding tube if you have one. Immediately after this we will ask you to stand between two plates of a special type of camera for a one-minute picture of your abdomen. If you find it difficult standing, we can take the pictures with you lying down. This picture will be repeated every 10 minutes for 60 to 120 minutes after your drink/feed. During this time, you should not eat, smoke or be too active.

### PRECAUTIONS

You should avoid prolonged close contact with pregnant women and children for 24hrs. Children and pregnant women should not accompany you to the department. You should also avoid blood tests and dental visits during this time. If you are planning to travel abroad within 7 days after your appointment, please inform the staff during your appointment.

### WHAT CAN I DO AFTER THE SCAN IS COMPLETED?

You can go home or to work. You can drive a car and eat and drink normally.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO THE RESULTS?

We cannot give you the results of your test. We will send a report to the doctor who asked for the scan as soon as possible.

## CONSENT

Although you consent for this treatment, you may at any time after that withdraw such consent. Please discuss this with your medical team.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

British Nuclear Medicine Society (BNMS)

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

## YOUR COMMENTS

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4731 or email: [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net)

## HAND HYGIENE

The Trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

## OTHER FORMATS

**If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.**

**Tel: 0300 131 4434 Email: [esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net)**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask a member of our team.

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## Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Dr Emma Owens, Consultant Radiologist, ESHT

Dr David Sallomi, Consultant Radiologist, ESHT

The directorate group that have agreed this patient information leaflet:

Core Services

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October 2025

Responsible clinician/author:

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