

SOMATOSTATIN RECEPTOR SCINTIGRAPHY

Scintigraphy is an imaging technique used to evaluate the metabolic processes in the tissues and lesions of the human body. A small amount of radiolabelled substance involved in metabolism will be injected into the patient to obtain an image. In the present case, it is a technetium-99m-labelled substance that binds to somatostatin receptors.

Simultaneously, computed tomography (CT) is performed – with or without intravenous administration of contrast agent, as appropriate.

The test is indicated in the diagnosis of neuroendocrine tumours.

Inform medical staff about conditions that need special attention:

- claustrophobia (fear of small or closed spaces);
- pregnancy; breastfeeding: you will receive guidance when to resume breastfeeding;
- you are unable to lie still.

Preparation for the test:

- pasta, potatoes, meat, carrots and other foods that may cause constipation should be avoided for two days prior to the test;
- you will be given detailed instructions on your diet and the use of prescribed medications before the test. In some cases, fasting is required until the end of the test. You can drink as you normally do;
- if you have constipation, use over-the-counter laxatives on the day preceding the test.

The procedure

The duration of the procedure, including preparation, is about 4–5 hours. Before the test, a nurse will speak to you, insert an intravenous cannula and inject a radioactive tracer.

The recording will start in 2–4 hours and last a maximum of 1.5 hours. During the recording, you will be asked to lie still to ensure a high-quality result.

After the study:

- follow your normal diet and drink plenty of fluids to foster removal of excessive tracer from the body;
- breastfeeding should usually be discontinued for 24 hours; removed breast milk should be discarded. Detailed instructions will be given to you by the personnel in the department;
- on the study day try to avoid close (less than 1 metre) and long lasting (over quarter an hour) contact with children and pregnant women;
- study results will be sent to referring physician within a week. If you have a doctor's appointment on the same day or the following day, please inform the study personnel.

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