

SCINTIGRAPHY OF THE SENTINEL LYMPH NODE IN MELANOMA AND PENILE, VULVAR OR CERVICAL CANCER

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's body to obtain an image. In the present case, it is a technetium-99m-labelled substance that accumulates to the closest lymph node to which cancer cells may have spread.

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

The test is used to determine the location of the sentinel lymph node.

Inform your doctor and medical staff if:

- you have experienced claustrophobia or the fear of enclosed spaces;
- you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or will come into close contact with children or pregnant women following the procedure;
- you are unable to lie still.

The test does not require special preparation.

The procedure

The duration of the procedure, including preparation, is about 2 hours. Before the test, a nurse will speak to you and provide detailed explanations on the procedure. The tracer is injected into the tumour or surgical scar area. During the recording, you will be asked to lie on your back on the examination table. The recording will last a maximum of 1–1.5 hours.

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;
- study results will be sent to referring physician.

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