



GUIDE



Thyroid scanning



The Ottawa Hospital | L'Hôpital
d'Ottawa



Disclaimer

This is general information developed by The Ottawa Hospital. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified health-care provider. Please consult your health-care provider who will be able to determine the appropriateness of the information for your specific situation.

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Your doctor has requested an examination called a “thyroid scan”. This is a simple and painless way of taking pictures of your thyroid gland using a radioactive tracer. You do not need to be fasting for this procedure. Please note that it is necessary to attend for two consecutive days. The procedure is:

1. A technologist will give you an injection in your arm, containing a small amount of radioactive tracer. The amount of radioactivity is very small and you will experience no reaction to it. After 5 to 10 minutes you will be asked to lie down on a table and a special detector, called a gamma camera, will be placed over your neck for about 15 minutes to produce a picture of your thyroid gland. The camera does not produce radiation; it simply picks up signals (gamma rays) from the radioactive material.
2. The technologist will then ask you to swallow a capsule, containing radioactive iodine. The amount of radioactivity in this capsule is very small and you will experience no reaction to it. You will be given a time to return the following day as it takes about 24 hours for the iodine to adequately accumulate in the thyroid gland. You are under no restrictions during this time.
3. When you return the next day the technologist will seat you in a chair and place a radiation detector close to your neck for about 5 minutes to measure how much of the iodine has accumulated in the thyroid gland.
4. You may then return home or, if you are hospitalized, return to your room feeling no ill effects from the examination. The results will be sent directly to your doctor.
5. There are certain medications and x-ray contrast materials which may invalidate the results of a thyroid scan. Therefore please call us if you are taking medication for your thyroid gland, if you are taking kelp supplement, if you are taking

