

BONE SCAN

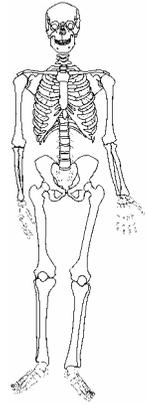
Patient Education

What is the purpose of this test?

A bone scan is done to identify any abnormalities in your bones. The results of this study will help your doctor make treatment recommendations.

How should I prepare for this test?

No special preparation is necessary, but you can help improve the outcome by drinking plenty of fluids the day before, unless restricted due to a medical condition. If you are well hydrated, it helps to distribute the tracer that is needed to make your bones appear during imaging. Also, if you have had barium x-ray studies such as a barium enema within approximately two days of this test, you need to inform the technician.



How long does the test take?

A nuclear medicine technologist will inject a radioactive tracer into a vein in your arm. You will then have a three-hour wait period in which you can eat and go about your normal activities. You must, however, drink at least 6-8 cups of water or other fluids after the injection. This will improve the distribution in the blood and will result in better quality images and less radiation exposure to your body. After three hours, you will be asked to remove any metallic objects (i.e., coins, belts, rings, earrings, and bracelets) and any clothing that may have metallic buttons or hooks. Before the pictures are taken, you will either lay on an imaging table, sit on a stool, or stand in front of a special camera. The camera senses the radioactive substance attached to your bones.

How is the test done?

After the initial injection, you will have a three-hour wait period and upon your return to Nuclear Medicine, it will take about 45 minutes to image your entire body. Extra time may be necessary if additional things are needed for a more thorough study of specific areas.

What about radiation?

Only a small amount of radiation is used in this procedure. The dose for each patient is carefully selected to give the least possible exposure while still allowing for an accurate exam. The radiologist and technologists are trained in radiation safety. **CAUTION:** This test should not be done during pregnancy or breast feeding.

After the test...

Your bone scan will be analyzed by a radiologist who specializes in interpreting this kind of test. He will report the findings to your doctor, who will then discuss the results with you and explain any treatment you may require. Unless your doctor gives you special instructions, you may resume your previous diet, medications, and activities.

CONTACT YOUR PHYSICIAN FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS