

## WHAT IS A WHOLE BODY BONE SCAN?

A bone scan is a nuclear medicine test that helps physicians to diagnose and track several types of bone disease. Your doctor may order a bone scan if you have unexplained skeletal pain suggesting bone loss, bone infection or a bone injury undetectable on a standard x-ray. A bone scan is also an important tool for detecting cancer that has spread (metastasized) to the bone from a tumor that started in a different organ. A whole body bone scan takes images of all your bones from head to toe.

## HOW IT WORKS

A whole body bone scan is a two part test. Upon arrival, a nurse or technologist will insert an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your hand or arm. A radioactive tracer is then injected into your arm. It takes several hours (2-3) for your bloodstream to carry the tracer to all bones in your body. Once you receive the injection the technologist will allow you to leave the hospital. You may eat, drink, or take any medication after your injection. The technologist will tell you what time to return to the hospital to have your imaging done. Once you return it will take approximately 35 minutes to complete the test.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The test will require you to lie flat. Multiple images of your anatomy will be taken using a nuclear medicine camera. The images will be taken at timed intervals during the exam. Unless your physician tells you otherwise, you may resume your normal activities after your nuclear medicine scan. If any special instructions are necessary, you will be informed by a technologist, nurse or physician before you leave the nuclear medicine department.

If you are a female patient between the ages of 9 and 55 you are required to either consent to a pregnancy test or sign a Pregnancy Test Waiver form prior to your exam. The only exception will be for females with a history of total hysterectomy. If you are breastfeeding please inform the technologist before your exam.

## HOW TO PREPARE

Follow these guidelines:

- Please bring your current home medications or a list of your medications with you the day of the test.
- You may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and to change into a hospital gown.
- Remove jewelry, removable dental hardware, eye glasses, and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the images.

## RESULTS

A radiologist will review your images and send a report to your doctor who ordered the test in 48- 72 hours. You'll get a call from your doctor's office to discuss the results and next steps. To check your results in our secure, online patient portal, My UNC Chart, visit [www.myuncchart.org](http://www.myuncchart.org).

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## WHAT IS A LIMITED BODY BONE SCAN?

A bone scan is a nuclear medicine test that helps physicians to diagnose and track several types of bone disease. Your doctor may order a bone scan if you have unexplained skeletal pain suggesting bone loss, bone infection or a bone injury undetectable on a standard x-ray. A limited bone scan is commonly ordered to evaluate for stress fractures. The test may be ordered after a patient still complains of pain or discomfort after normal x-ray images.

## HOW IT WORKS

A limited bone scan is a two part test. Upon arrival, a nurse or technologist will insert an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your hand or arm. A radioactive tracer is then injected into your arm. It takes several (2-3) hours for your bloodstream to carry the tracer throughout your body. Once you receive the injection the technologist will allow you to leave the hospital. You may eat, drink, or take any medication after your injection. The technologist will tell you what time to return to the hospital to have your imaging done. Once you return it will take approximately 20 minutes to complete the test.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The test will require you to lie flat or sit upright. Multiple images of your anatomy will be taken using a nuclear medicine camera. The images will be taken at timed intervals during the exam. Unless your physician tells you otherwise, you may resume your normal activities after your nuclear medicine scan. If any special instructions are necessary, you will be informed by a technologist, nurse or physician before you leave the nuclear medicine department.

If you are a female patient between the ages of 9 and 55 you are required to either consent to a pregnancy test or sign a Pregnancy Test Waiver form prior to your exam. The only exception will be for females with a history of total hysterectomy. If you are breastfeeding please inform the technologist before your exam.

## HOW TO PREPARE

Follow these guidelines:

- Please bring your current home medications or a list of your medications with you the day of the test.
- You may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and to change into a hospital gown.
- Remove jewelry, removable dental hardware, eye glasses, and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the images.

## RESULTS

A radiologist will review your images and send a report to your doctor who ordered the test in 48- 72 hours. You'll get a call from your doctor's office to discuss the results and next steps. To check your results in our secure, online patient portal, My UNC Chart, visit [www.myuncchart.org](http://www.myuncchart.org).

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## WHAT IS A THREE PHASE BONE SCAN?

A bone scan is a nuclear medicine test that helps physicians to diagnose and track several types of bone disease. Your doctor may order a bone scan if you have unexplained skeletal pain suggesting bone loss, bone infection or a bone injury undetectable on a standard x-ray. **3-phase bone** scan is done with three different phases - blood flow, blood pool, and delayed. This procedure is done slightly different than above procedures. 3-Phase Bone Scan requires the technologist to place the patient in proper position under the nuclear medicine camera prior to injection of the radiotracer. Once the patient is in position the technologist will inject the patient with the radiotracer and start taking images of blood flow immediately - hence blood flow phase. The computer is also set up to automatically acquire a short 180 seconds image of surrounding tissues - blood pool phase. The delayed phase is imaged after the tracer has time to circulate through the blood stream.

## HOW IT WORKS

3 phase bone scan is a two part test. Upon arrival, a nurse or technologist will insert an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your hand or arm. A radioactive tracer is then injected into your arm. Images are immediately taken for 10 minutes. Once you complete the first two sets of images, the technologist will allow you to leave the hospital. It takes several (2-3) hours for your bloodstream to carry the tracer throughout your body. The technologist will tell you what time to return to the hospital to have your third set of images done. Once you return you will have images taken again for approximately 20 minutes.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The test may require you to stand, lie flat, or turn from side to side. Multiple images of your anatomy will be taken using a nuclear medicine camera. The images will be taken at timed intervals during the exam. Unless your physician tells

you otherwise, you may resume your normal activities after your nuclear medicine scan. If any special instructions are necessary, you will be informed by a technologist, nurse or physician before you leave the nuclear medicine department.

If you are a female patient between the ages of 9 and 55 you are required to either consent to a pregnancy test or sign a Pregnancy Test Waiver form prior to your exam. The only exception will be for females with a history of total hysterectomy. If you are breastfeeding please inform the technologist before your exam.

## HOW TO PREPARE

Follow these guidelines:

- Please bring your current home medications or a list of your medications with you the day of the test.
- You may be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and to change into a hospital gown.
- Remove jewelry, removable dental hardware, eye glasses, and any metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the images.

## RESULTS

A radiologist will review your images and send a report to your doctor who ordered the test in 48- 72 hours. You'll get a call from your doctor's office to discuss the results and next steps. To check your results in our secure, online patient portal, My UNC Chart, visit [www.myuncchart.org](http://www.myuncchart.org).