

## WHAT IS A GASTRIC EMPTYING SCAN?

A gastric emptying scan (GES) is a nuclear medicine exam that uses a special radioactive material that allows physicians to identify abnormalities related to emptying of the stomach. Diseases that involve changes in the way the stomach contracts (motility disorders) are best diagnosed by this test.

## HOW IT WORKS

You will be given a meal to eat which contains a radioactive tracer mixed in your food. An immediate image of your stomach will be taken with you standing, using the nuclear medicine camera. Images will be taken every 15 to 30 minutes to determine how long it takes your stomach to empty the food out. Each image takes one minute. You will be allowed to sit up between images.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The test may require you to stand or 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.

The duration of this test is dependent on how your body functions. Every individual is different but the average time for the test is 1 hour. No imaging will be done after 90 minutes.

## HOW TO PREPARE

Follow these guidelines:

- **You must have nothing to eat or drink (including medications) after midnight the day of the test.**
- If you are diabetic, please consult your physician as to any special instructions concerning your diabetes medication prior to the test.
- 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 change into a hospital gown to get a more accurate picture.
- 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 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).