

## WHAT IS A RENAL SCAN?

A renal scan evaluates the appearance and function of the kidneys. Different types of renal scans are used to examine different aspects of the kidneys and kidney functioning; however, all of these procedures involve the injection of a radiotracer or radioisotope, or imaging substance that emits a tiny amount of radioactivity, into the patient. Because the radiotracer accumulates differently in different kinds of tissue, it can help physicians determine if something is wrong with the kidneys. After injection, the radiotracer eventually accumulates in the kidneys, where it gives off energy in the form of gamma rays. This energy is detected by a nuclear medicine camera. The camera works with a computer to measure the amount of radiotracer absorbed by the body and to produce special pictures offering details on both the structure and function of organs and tissues.

## HOW IT WORKS

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. Your bloodstream filters this tracer to the area of your kidneys. Images of this area are taken immediately following your injection.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The test may 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.

The test takes 45 minutes.

## 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 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).