

Is there a radiation risk?

Techneium-99m, the radioisotope used, has a half-life of six hours so it quickly decays away to background levels. The radiation levels in this procedure are very low, less than in most X-Ray procedures.

Assessment of possible health affects has shown that the benefits from medical radiation exposure far outweigh any risks. X-ray and scintigraphy procedures are only performed when there will be a net benefit to the patient and there is no reasonable alternative.

If you are pregnant, suspect you may be or are a nursing mother, discuss this with your doctor before undergoing the test.

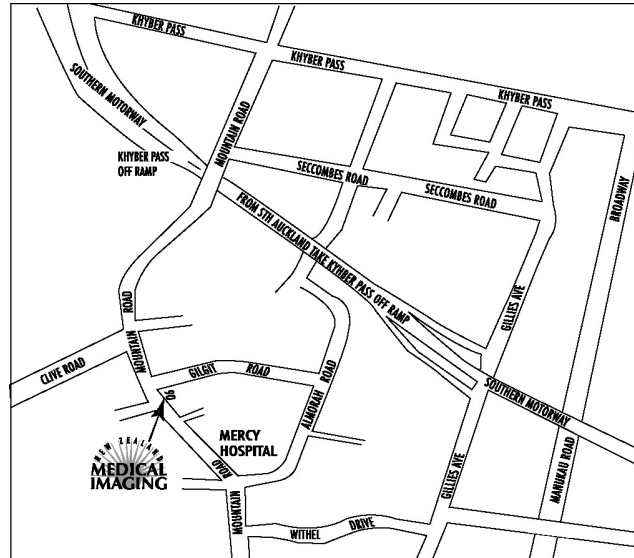


Appointment :

Date: _____

Times: _____

Location:



**New Zealand Medical Imaging
90 Mountain Road
Epsom, Auckland.**

Tel: 09.638 9173

09.639 9174

**Free phone 0800 IMAGING
(0800 462 446)**

Other NZMI information brochures:

- Heart Scanning
- Bone Scanning
- Kidney Scanning
- Breast Scanning

Lymph Nodes

**NEW ZEALAND
MEDICAL
IMAGING**

LYMPHOSCINTIGRAPHY SENTINEL NODE MAPPING

Why Lymphoscintigraphy?

Cancers can spread either by haematogenous (blood) routes to bones, lungs, liver, or brain or by lymphatic routes to lymph nodes.

Assessment of skeletal spread is by bone scan scintigraphy. Assessment of lymph nodes in many cases still requires surgical biopsy. With Lymphoscintigraphy the lymphatic flow is visualised and the sentinel lymph node (SLN) on a direct drainage pathway from the primary tumor is identified and located.

What does the scan involve?

A very small slightly radioactive pharmaceutical is injected near the site of the primary malignancy. This tracer travels along the lymphatic channels and accumulates in the lymphatic nodes.

These nodes can then be visualised using a gamma camera and reproduced onto film.



Patient under the gamma camera

The information gained from these images can help the surgeon to locate and remove the sentinel lymph node with a smaller incision and decreased surgical times. The removed nodes are analysed for the presence of tumour deposits.

Preparations or Restrictions

There are no preparations or restrictions before or after a lymphoscintigraphy scan, you are able to drive, eat and drink as normal. If going to surgery immediately after the scan there will be restrictions associated with the surgery so follow any instructions given to you by your doctor.

Having the scan itself is just a matter of lying on the scanning bed for about 30-40 minutes whilst the technologist moves the camera to various positions around your body.

Whilst the scan is an easy procedure the introduction of the radiopharmaceutical does involve several injections around the tumour site which does sting a bit at the time. There is no lingering pain and this injection procedure is over and done with in about 5 minutes.

On completion of the scan the technologist may mark with a felt tip pen some dots on your skin to help guide the surgeon to the location of the sentinel lymph node. A copy of the scan is usually given to you to take with you, to give to the surgeon that afternoon or the following day.

How long does it take?

For most appointments allow about one hour. On some occasions delayed pictures are required which means the appointment could take 2 to 2½ hours.

There are no side affects from this procedure and you are able proceed as normal after the scan.

You are more than welcome to have someone accompany you through out this procedure. It is quite acceptable to request a chaperone during any NZMI scanning procedures.

Sentinel lymph node images

