

Brain DaTscan

How to prepare and what to expect

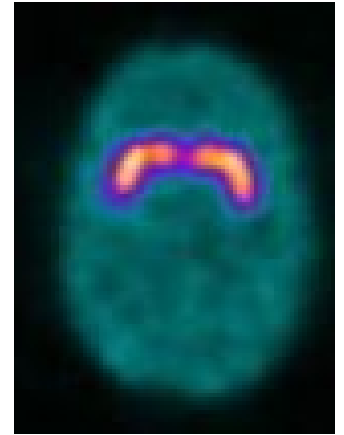
This handout explains a brain DaTscan: how it works, how to prepare, how the scan is done, and how to get your results.

What is a brain DaTscan?

A *brain DaTscan* is used to diagnose some diseases of the brain. It is a nuclear medicine scan because it uses a radioactive drug called *ioflupane I-123*. DaTscan is the brand name for this drug.

This scan is also a form of radiology, because radiation is used to take pictures of the body.

Your DaTscan dose is being special-ordered for you. Because of this, we need **at least** 72 hours' notice if you must cancel or reschedule your scan.



A brain DaTscan image

Call 206.598.4240 at least 72 hours before your appointment if you need to cancel or reschedule your scan.

Why do I need this scan?

A DaTscan is done to help your doctor find the cause of problems such as *tremor* (shakiness) or memory loss.

How does the scan work?

We will give you a small dose of *tracer* (radioactive material) through an *intravenous* (IV) line. This tracer will collect in part of your brain and give off *gamma rays*. A special camera called a *gamma camera* will use these rays to produce pictures and measurements of your brain.

How do I prepare?

- *If you were assigned female at birth:* Tell your provider if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or if there is any chance you could be pregnant.
- Some drugs will affect the results of your brain DaTscan. **You must stop taking these drugs before your scan.**

The table below lists drugs that need to be stopped, and for how long before your scan. The list is in alphabetical order by the generic name of the drug. Common brand names are listed after the generic name.

Please talk with your doctor who prescribed the drug to confirm these instructions.

Drugs to Stop	When to Stop
Amphetamines: Adderall, Dexedrine, Dexosyn, Dextrostat, Didrex, ProCentra, Vynanse	7 days before
Benztropine: Cogentin	5 days before
Bupropion or Amfebutamone: Aplenzin, Budeprion, Voxra, Wellbutrin, Zyban	8 days before
Cocaine	2 days before
Dexamphetamines: Dexedrine, Dextrostat, Liquadd, Procentra	7 days before
Ephedrine	1 day before
Fentanyl	5 days before
Isoflurane	1 day before
Ketamine	1 day before
Mazindol: Mazanor, Sanorex	3 days before
Methamphetamines: Methampex, Methydrine, Pervitin, Temmler	3 days before
Methylphenidates: Concerta, Metadate, Methylin, Ritalin	2 days before
Modafinil: Provigil	3 days before
Phencyclidine: Phenylcyclohexyl piperidine (PCP)	14 days before

How is the scan done?

- *If you were assigned female at birth:* Before the scan begins, tell the technologist if there is any chance you could be pregnant.
- We will ask you to drink a small cup of water with potassium iodine in it. This water may have a metallic taste.
- One hour after you drink the potassium iodine water, the technologist will inject a small amount of tracer into a vein in your arm or hand through your IV.

- You must stay in the Nuclear Medicine department for 30 minutes after the injection.
- You will then have a break for 3 hours. It is OK to eat and drink during this break.
- You must return to the clinic after this 3-hour break to have images of your brain taken.
- The technologist will take images of your brain with the gamma camera 4 hours after your tracer injection. You must lie flat on the exam table while these images are being taken.
- You must not move while the camera is taking pictures. If you move, the pictures will be blurry and may have to be taken again.
- Taking the images will take 40 to 45 minutes. Your total time in the imaging room will be about 1 hour.
- You may also have a low-dose CT scan of your brain to help confirm any results. A CT scan is another way to take images inside your body.
- It will take about 5½ hours from the time you drink the potassium iodine water until the scans are complete.

What will I feel during the scan?

- Lying still on the exam table may be hard for some patients. The technologist will help make you as comfortable as possible.
- You may feel some minor discomfort from the IV.
- The camera will be close to your head. This may make you feel confined or uneasy (*claustrophobic*). Please tell the doctor who referred you for this scan if you know you are claustrophobic.

Are there any side effects from the scan?

- Most of the radioactivity from the tracer will quickly pass out of your body in your urine or stool. The rest simply goes away over time.
- Bad reactions to this scan are very rare. Less than 1% of patients (fewer than 1 out of 100) have a bad reaction. Reactions may include:
 - Headache or *vertigo* (dizziness)
 - Nausea
 - Dry mouth

Who reviews the images? How do I get the results?

After the scan, the nuclear medicine doctor will review your images, prepare a written report, and talk with your provider about the results. Your own provider will then talk with you about the results.

You and your provider will decide the next step, such as treatment for a problem, as needed.

You may also read your results on your MyChart page. If you need copies of your images on disc, call Radiology Records at 206.598.6206.

If you needed to stop taking any medicines on the day of your scan, ask your provider when to start taking them again.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

UWMC - Montlake Imaging
Services: 206.598.6200