

Renogram Exam

How to prepare and what to expect

A renogram is a nuclear medicine exam that studies the kidneys and how they work. This handout explains how to prepare for the exam, how it works, what you may feel during the exam, and how to get your results.

What is a renogram exam?

A renogram exam studies your kidneys and shows how well they are working. It is a nuclear medicine exam that uses a radioactive material to detect and treat disease. It is a form of radiology because radiation is used to take pictures of your body.

How does the exam work?

You will be given a small dose of a radioactive *tracer* through an *intravenous* (IV) line that has been placed into a vein in your arm. The tracer will give off *gamma rays* as it moves through your kidneys and into your bladder. A *gamma camera* detects the rays and creates images and measurements of your kidneys.

How do I prepare for the exam?

Drink at least 24 to 36 ounces of water, 1 to 2 hours before the exam. You must be well hydrated for the exam.

How is the exam done?

- The tracer is injected through an IV. Right after the injection, the camera begins taking pictures.
- About 15 minutes after the injection, you may receive a dose of Lasix. Lasix is a *diuretic* (water pill) that will make you need to urinate often. It can also cause constipation (slow bowels). Keep drinking water after the exam to keep your bowels moving and avoid getting dehydrated.



A gamma camera

- The exam takes 45 minutes. While the pictures are being taken, you must hold very still.
- After 40 minutes, you will take a break and go to the bathroom to urinate. When you return, the gamma camera will take another picture. Taking this picture will take 2 minutes.
- After the exam, a doctor with special training in nuclear medicine will check the quality of the pictures. If needed, we may ask to take more pictures.

What will I feel during the exam?

- You may feel a little discomfort from the IV.
- Lying still on the exam table may be hard for some people.

What happens to the tracer?

Most of the radioactivity from the tracer passes out of your body in your urine or stool within one day. The rest simply goes away over time.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

When the exam is over, the nuclear medicine doctor will review your pictures, prepare a written report, and talk with your provider about the results. Your provider will then talk with you about the results.

You may also read your results on your eCare Results page. If you need copies of your images on disc, call 206.598.6206.

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

Questions?

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

- UWMC Imaging Services: 206.598.6200
- Harborview Nuclear Medicine: 206.744.4473