



Nuclear Medicine Bone Scan

Exam scheduling
(218)249-5593
St. Luke's
(218)249-5555
Diagnostic Imaging
(218)249-5222
www.slhduluth.com/hospital/imaging/

Exam Information

Diagnostic Imaging

What is a Nuclear Medicine bone scan exam?

A small amount of radioactive material (no side effects) is injected and a special camera is used to image the skeletal system. It is used to diagnose bone problems such as fractures, cancer, infections, and joint problems such as arthritis or replacements.

How is the exam performed?

A small amount of radioactive material is injected into an arm vein after which there is **a three hour waiting period**. There are no restrictions during this period, you may leave the hospital and the technologist will give you a time to return. You will be asked to drink plenty of fluids and empty your bladder often during this waiting period. After this time you will be asked to lie on a special exam table. It is very important for you to be as still as possible. The technologist will ensure your comfort. A camera will be positioned very close to your body during the scan. The entire scan will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. The camera creates an image that doctors can use to evaluate your skeleton.

How should I prepare for the exam?

- You will need to bring a current list of your medications.
- There is no prep before the exam.
- Dress in comfortable clothes. Try to wear clothing without metal.

What will I feel during the exam?

Reactions to the injection are rare. Patients can resume normal activity after the exam. The radioactive material decays away and is eliminated through body fluids.

Who interprets the exam and when will I get my results?

After the exam, a doctor who is specially trained to interpret nuclear medicine exams will review your study and send a report to the physician that ordered the test for you. That physician will then contact you with your results.