



Nuclear Medicine Sentinel Node Melanoma

Exam scheduling

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St. Luke's

(218)249-5555

Diagnostic Imaging

(218)249-5222

www.slhduluth.com/hospital/imaging/

Exam Information

Diagnostic Imaging

What is a Sentinel Node injection for Melanoma exam?

This is a method of identifying the sentinel node, or node nearest a tumor, by injecting radioactive particles (no side effects) under the skin.

How is the exam performed?

Several hours before surgery, a radiologist will inject radioactive material in four small sites around the area of the melanoma. The injections are done in the Nuclear Medicine Department.

Imaging begins immediately with a special camera and the pictures will be taken in several different positions.

Using the camera, the radioactive material is followed through the lymphatic system to the sentinel node.

With a marker, the node is marked on the skin to aid the surgeon in identifying it for removal in surgery.

The procedure typically takes 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete.

How should I prepare for the exam?

Refer to pre-op instructions.

What will I feel during the exam?

The radiologist will wash the area to be injected with a batadine (soapy) solution which is cool and wet. The injections are given just under the skin with a hypodermic needle. This will sting and be uncomfortable though the technologist will massage the area immediately after injection and the stinging usually passes quite quickly.

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

After the exam, a radiologist who is specially trained to interpret Sentinel Node injections will review your images and send a written report to the physician that is doing the surgery for you.