

Preparation for a Kidney Scan in Nuclear Medicine

How will a Kidney Scan help my child?

A renal scan is a test that can help the doctor find out if your child's kidneys are infected, injured, or blocked. Special pictures are taken after a medicine is injected into a vein. The pictures show the medicine in the kidneys. There are 2 types of scans: the Cortical scan (which looks for kidney scars) and the Renal Lasix scan (which looks for blockage in the tubes coming from the kidneys). Sometimes the cortical scan is called a DMSA scan and the Renal Lasix scan is called a MAG-3 scan because of the medicines used in each one. Both tests also can compare the amount of kidney function in the right and left kidneys.

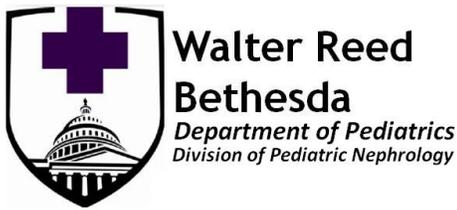
Preparing for the Scan

Before coming to the hospital, read the explanation that follows and explain to your child what will happen during the test. For young children, use simple words and explain only shortly before the test.

Children 4 years and under may require sedation for their procedure. You will be given certain eating and drinking restrictions necessary to complete the exam. The day of the exam a parent or guardian needs to be present to sign informed consent for sedation.

If your child is an infant, it is helpful to bring along a bottle of formula or juice for after the test. It is also recommended that you bring a pacifier, blanket or special toy to help calm your child. For older children, it is helpful to bring a book or toy to play with while waiting and a favorite video to watch or music to listen to during the test. It is helpful to have another caregiver stay with your child's siblings during the pictures.

You will report to the pediatric Sedation Clinic on the 3rd Floor of the Arrowhead Building. This clinic is close to the pediatric hospital ward. You will be given directions on how to get there, but if you are unsure, ask any of the Walter Reed Bethesda staff for help. A pediatric nurse will place an IV in your child's arm or foot. A tube is also placed into the bladder. After that, the nurse will accompany you and your child to the Nuclear Medicine Clinic.



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The Actual Scan

In the Nuclear Medicine area, a technologist will inject medicine into your child's vein. After this, there is a 90-minute wait before the test is continued. After the 90-minute wait, the child will lie on a soft table while a special camera is used to take pictures from above and below the child. If sedation medicine is necessary so that your child can hold still for the pictures, a nurse or doctor will explain it to you. It will take from 35 to 90 minutes to take all of the pictures. During this time the camera will not touch or hurt your child. You are encouraged to stay with your child during the test. Children are often more cooperative and less apprehensive when a loved one is present.

It is possible that during the procedure your child may experience some discomfort. Please tell the doctor, nurse or technologist if pain occurs.

After the Scan

Your child will remove the medicine from the body when he or she urinates. Your child should drink plenty of fluids and urinate often to help clear the medicine from his / her body. It should be completely out of your child's body within 24 hours. As always, you and your child should wash your hands after the child urinates or when handling urine-soaked diapers or sheets.

After the test, your child may return to regular daily activities and meals. If your child had sedation medicine, a nurse will give you additional instructions concerning activities and meals. Results of the test will be sent to your child's doctor who will contact you about the results.