

RENAL SCANS

What are they used for?

There are a number of different types of renal scans, each with a different focus on kidney function or anatomy. A MAG-3 or DTPA renal scan is a test that assesses renal function and drainage of the urinary system. In some instances, a medicine called Lasix, will be given after the radiotracer to assist kidney drainage. DMSA renal scans are also used to assess kidney function and if there are any structural abnormalities, such as scarring or infections.

What is involved?

A DMSA scan of the kidneys involves an injection of the radiotracer, followed by the scan 2-4 hours after the injection. You are allowed to eat and drink normally during this time. Similarly, renal perfusion scans examine blood flow to the kidneys and identifies potential narrowing of the renal arteries. Through a series of images taken over 20 to 30 minutes immediately after radiopharmaceutical injection, it also helps determine how well the kidneys are working. Diuretic renal scintigraphy, such as MAG-3 or DTPA renal scans, detects kidney blockages or obstruction of urine flow through images by taking images before and after the introduction of a diuretic.

How should I prepare?

Preparation can vary depending on the type of scan your doctor has requested. You may be asked to drink extra fluid or be given a diuretic to increase urine production. In some cases, you may need to empty your bladder during the scan so allow accurate assessment of urinary drainage. You also may be asked to discontinue use of some medications prior to your exam. Like all nuclear medicine scans at TeleMed, Renal Scans are bulk billed and so it is important that you bring your Medicare card with you on the day.