

Patient information

Thyroid scintigraphy

Dear patient

On behalf of the Director of our Nuclear Medicine Service and the Management of University Hospital Zurich we cordially welcome you. We expect you for an outpatient examination.

For administrative purposes, please bring along your insurance certificate and show it to our receptionists.

What is a thyroid scintigraphy?

A thyroid scintigraphy is indicated in several disease states. Usually the patient examined suffers from a nodular goiter or a thyroid producing too much thyroid hormone. After the injection of a small dose of radioactivity, a scanner able to detect it, will be placed over you and images are obtained.

In general, we perform a thyroid ultrasonography in addition to the thyroid scintigraphy.

Prior to the examination

Please inform us when we arrange the appointment for the examination, which type of thyroid medication you are taking. The physicians will decide, whether and if so, for how long, you have to discontinue this medication prior to the examination. All other medications can be taken as usual.

Kindly inform us also, whether you had an X-ray examination with contrast media (such as a CT scan or a cardiac catheterization) in the last months. The doctors need to decide, whether the examination can be carried out at the time foreseen, as such contrast media might block the thyroid uptake of the substance we are giving you.

There are no dietary restrictions prior to the exam. Upon arrival at the hospital, please present yourself to the reception desk of Nuclear Medicine just to the left of the main entrance, level A.

Examination proper

For a thyroid scintigraphy we inject you a small dose of a radioactive substance. Like iodine, this radioactive substance accumulates in your thyroid. After 15 – 25 minutes, we will take a scan of your neck as well as of the injection site. Using

computers, we then produce images, on which we can evaluate your thyroid gland.

In total the examination lasts 45 – 60 minutes. During the taking of the scan, you need to lay still on the examination table. After that, the examination is finished.

If you suffer from claustrophobia, we suggest that you bring an accompanying person, who will be allowed to sit next to you during the entire examination. Children and young adults are excluded.

Which side effects can be experienced?

The substance given is very well tolerated. In the literature and in our own experience no side effects are known. The dose of ionizing radiation given is very small and comparable to that of a standard X-ray.

The evaluation of your examination takes some time. Hence, we cannot give you any results right after the examination. We will transmit the results and the images taken to the referring physician as soon as they are ready.

Please note:

If you are unable to keep your appointment, you have to let us know by phone no later than noon of the day preceding the examination. Else we have to bill you for the cost of the examination.

Phone: +41 44 255 35 55

Parking space around the University Hospital is very limited and maximum parking time is two hours. We kindly ask you to use public transportation, whenever possible.