Bone Scan

Your caregiver has requested that you have a bone scan. In this test a very small amount of radioactive material is injected into a vein (*intravenously*). This radioactive material targets your bones, but the highest concentration occurs at areas of:

- Injury.
- Disease.

Your bones can then be scanned by a machine that detects radioactive material. The scanning is painless. The scan can detect bone damage from various causes and will sometimes detect very small defects in bones that ordinary X-rays cannot. It can take up to 4 hours to finish a scan.

Common uses for this exam include looking for:

- Low bone density (*osteopenia*).
- Not enough new bone forming and/or too much old bone being reabsorbed by the body (*osteoporosis*).

PREPARATION

- Drink extra fluids for 24 hours prior to the exam.
- Do not have exams using barium or X-ray contrast medium for 48 hours before the exam.
- Continue with normal routines regarding food and medications.
- Do not wear jewelry or clothes with metal to the exam.

BEFORE YOUR EXAM

You should be present one hour prior to your procedure, or as directed by your caregiver. Check in at the admissions desk to fill out necessary forms if not pre-registered. There will be consent forms to sign prior to the procedure. If accompanied by friends or family, there is a waiting area for them while you are having your procedure.

LET YOUR CAREGIVERS KNOW ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:

- Allergies.
- Medications taken including herbs, eye drops, over-the-counter medications, and creams.
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams).
- Previous problems with anesthetics.
- Possibility of pregnancy, if this applies.
- History of blood clots (*thrombophlebitis*).
- History of bleeding or blood problems.
- Previous surgery.
- Other health problems.

PROCEDURE

- Radioactive material is injected intravenously over approximately ten minutes.
- There generally are no side effects from the injection.
- Depending on the type of exam, images are taken at varying time intervals for up to 4 hours. Your technologist performing the test will let you know what time intervals will be used for your test. You may go on with normal activities in between scans.

DURING THE WAITING PERIODS

- Continue drinking extra fluids.
- Empty your bladder often as this eliminates the radioactive material that your bones do not use.
- Eat and take medications normally during the test.

After the exam:

- You may return to all normal activities.
- All of the radioactive material will eventually leave your body through your urine. The radioactive material used is in such a small amount you should have no long-term effect from this test.
- The radioactive material that you will be peeing out will not be harmful for your family or other people

around you.

Your scan will be interpreted by a a specialist in reading X-rays (*radiologist*) with special training in nuclear medicine. He/she will send a report of this scan to your primary caregiver. It may take a couple days for your primary caregiver to receive and review these results. Find out how you are to receive your results, or **call for your results** as instructed by your caregiver. Remember, it is **your responsibility** to obtain the results of your procedure. *Do not assume everything is fine because you do not hear from your caregiver.*

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