

# Thyroid Uptake and Scan

## Appointment Information

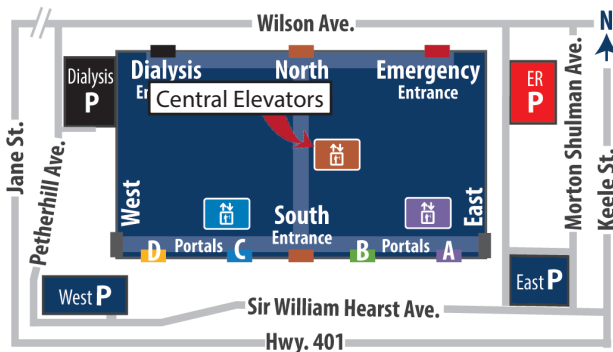


You have an appointment for a **thyroid uptake and scan**. The tests take place over 2 days. Please read this handout for information on how to prepare for these tests.

### Location:

Medical Imaging - Nuclear Medicine  
Humber River Health  
1235 Wilson Ave., Toronto, ON M3M 0B2

We are located on the main floor (level 1), behind the Central Elevators. Follow the signs to Nuclear Medicine Registration.



**Arriving by car (or Wheel-Trans):** Use the South Entrance.

**Arriving by TTC:** Use the North Entrance.

### Bring to the hospital:

- Your health card (OHIP) and photo ID.
- All the medicines you are currently taking, including over-the-counter medicines, herbals and supplements, in their original containers.

**Do not** bring jewelry or other valuables.

## What is a thyroid uptake and scan?

### THYROID UPTAKE:

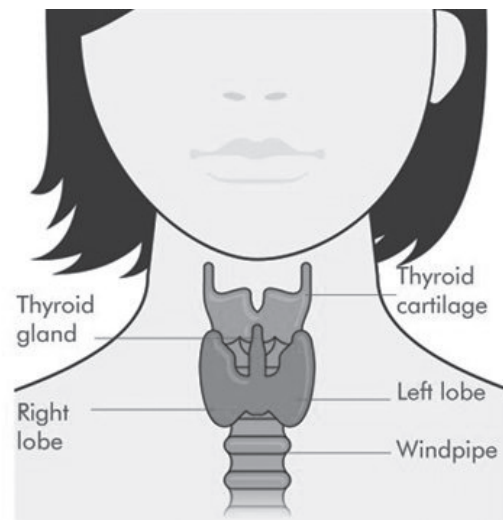
A **thyroid uptake** is a test that measures how your thyroid functions. You will swallow a small pill that contains a tiny amount of radioactive material (iodine). The pill will break down in your stomach and the iodine will move into your bloodstream.

Your thyroid gland will pick up the iodine. We will then position a special machine beside your neck to count how much iodine your thyroid gland has collected. This amount depends on how active your gland is.

### THYROID SCAN:

A **thyroid scan** is a test that shows the size, shape, and position of your thyroid gland. We will inject a small amount of radioactive material into your vein. As it moves through your body, your thyroid gland will pick up the radioactive material.

We will then use a special camera to detect problem areas, which absorb the material differently than normal areas.



The thyroid gland. Figure courtesy of Macmillan Cancer Support. Reprinted with permission.

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## How do I prepare for the tests?

### TELL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU:

- Are currently taking medicine for a thyroid condition. Your doctor will let you know which medicines, if any, to stop taking before the tests.
- Have had any X-ray studies that used a contrast dye in the last 6 weeks. This can interfere with the accuracy of the tests.
- Have any allergies, especially to any medicine. Share this information with your healthcare team and wear your MedicAlert® bracelet on the day of your test.
- Are pregnant, think you may be pregnant, or are breastfeeding.
  - If you are pregnant, you and your doctor will discuss the safety issues of having the tests at this time.
  - If you are breastfeeding, we may postpone your tests or ask you to stop breastfeeding as the radioactive material we inject can transfer to the breast milk.

### ON THE DAY OF YOUR TESTS:

- Take or hold your regular medicine as your doctor advised.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Do not wear clothes that have zippers, belts, or buttons made of metal.
- If you need support, you may have someone with you during the test. Please do not bring young children or pregnant women.

## What can I expect during the tests?

### **The thyroid uptake and scan tests take 2 visits to the Nuclear Medicine Department.**

#### **ON DAY 1:**

- The technologist will give you a small pill that contains a tiny amount of radioactive material (iodine) for you to swallow.
- It will take several hours for your thyroid gland to absorb the pill. We will ask you to return to the hospital in 24 hours. During this time, you may eat or drink as you normally would.

#### **ON DAY 2:**

##### **BEFORE THE TESTS:**

- Remove hair clips or metal objects you are wearing that may interfere with the camera.
- Do not bring jewelry or other valuables.

##### **DURING THE THYROID UPTAKE:**

- You will need to sit very still on a chair, while the technologist positions a machine close to your neck.
- The machine will detect the small amount of radiation that the iodine gives off. While the machine is counting, you must keep your head and neck still and breathe normally. This will take several minutes. You will not feel anything while the machine is counting.
- We will be able to see exactly how much iodine has gathered in your thyroid gland.

##### **DURING THE THYROID SCAN:**

- The technologist will inject a small amount of radioactive material into your vein. It will take 15 to 30 minutes for your thyroid gland to pick up the radioactive material.
- The technologist will position you on the imaging bed, under a special camera.

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- The camera will detect the radiation from the radioactive material. Please lay very still and breathe normally while the technologist takes the pictures. You will not feel anything.
  - The pictures will show us where the radioactive material has gathered in your thyroid gland.
  - The scan takes about 10 to 30 minutes.

#### **AFTER THE TESTS:**

- The 2 tests should take about 30 to 60 minutes to complete. You may be able to go home soon after you have finished your tests.

### **How do I care for myself at home?**

#### **CARE INSTRUCTIONS:**

- You may resume all your regular activities, unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
- Continue to drink extra fluid throughout the day to help flush the radioactive material out of your body.

#### **TRAVEL INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Small amounts of radiation from your body may set off radiation monitors at airports, border crossings, and waste disposal sites.
- If you will be in these areas (or travelling outside of Canada) in the near future, tell your doctor or technologist. They may provide a letter describing the medical test you received.

#### **RESULTS:**

- A specially trained doctor will interpret your pictures and send a report back to your doctor. This usually takes several days.
- Your doctor may order other tests to gather more information.
- When your report is ready, you can view it on **myHumberHealth** (<https://myhumberhealth.ca>) or buy an electronic copy from **PocketHealth** (<https://hrh.mypockethealth.com/request>). Please make sure we have your correct email address at registration.

### **Are there any risks associated with this test?**

There is low risk from the radioactive material. Your body is able to get rid of the radioactive material completely within several days.

In general, complications, side effects, and allergic reactions are rare with nuclear medicine procedures.

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**For more information, please contact:**

**Medical Imaging - Nuclear Medicine,  
Humber River Health**

Tel: (416) 242-1000 ext. 63823

7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday

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The information provided in this booklet is for educational purposes. It does not replace the advice or specific instructions from your doctor, nurse, or other healthcare provider. Do not use this information to diagnose or treat. If you have questions about your own care, please speak with your healthcare provider.

<b>English:</b> This information is important! If you have trouble reading this, ask someone to help you.	<b>Italian:</b> Queste informazioni sono importanti! Se ha difficoltà a leggere questo, chiedi aiuto a qualcuno.	<b>Spanish:</b> ¡Esta información es importante! Si tiene dificultad en leer esto, pida que alguien le ayude.
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