

# Sentinel Node Lymphangiogram

## Appointment Information

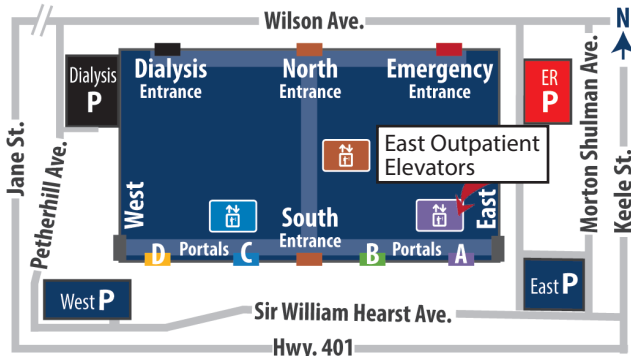


You have an appointment for a **sentinel node lymphangiogram**. Please read this handout for information on how to prepare.

**Location:** Humber River Health  
1235 Wilson Ave., Toronto, ON M3M 0B2

**Breast Health Centre:** On level 2. Take the East Outpatient Elevators and follow the signs to Breast Health Centre Registration.

**Nuclear Medicine:** On level 1 (main floor), behind the Central Elevators. Follow the signs to Nuclear Medicine Registration.



**Arriving by car (or Wheel-Trans):** Nuclear Medicine - use the South entrance. Breast Health Centre - use East or Portal A entrances.

**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 sentinel node lymphangiogram?

A **sentinel node lymphangiogram** is a procedure where we inject a radioactive material near a tumour. We will use a special camera to see the path it will take from the tumour into the lymphatic system. The first node in the lymphatic system that the material will spread to is called the "sentinel lymph node".

This procedure is done before your surgery. The radioactive material will help the surgeon to locate and remove the sentinel lymph node from the breast tissue or armpit. It can also help the surgeon to see if the cancer has spread beyond the primary tumour.

## How do I prepare for the procedure?

### TELL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU:

- Are currently taking medicines, including prescription or over-the-counter medicines, herbals, supplements, or blood thinners. Your doctor will let you know which medicines, if any, to stop taking before the scan.
- 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 procedure at this time.
  - If you are breastfeeding, we may cancel your procedure as the radioactive material we inject can transfer to the breast milk.
- 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.

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## **ON THE DAY OF YOUR PROCEDURE:**

**Please note:** Each patient's procedure appointment is different.

For example, during this procedure, we may need to take you to the Breast Health Centre. We will let you know of the details of your procedure when you arrive at the hospital.

Depending on your scheduled surgery time, you may need to come to the Nuclear Medicine Department the day before your surgery to do the procedure.

- Take your 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 before the procedure.

## **What can I expect during the procedure?**

### **BEFORE THE PROCEDURE:**

- Remove your clothes, from the waist up, and change into a gown.
- Remove any jewelry, dental appliances, eyeglasses, hair clips, or metal objects you are wearing that may interfere with the camera.

### **DURING THE PROCEDURE:**

- The technologist will position you on the imaging bed or stretcher, under a special camera.
- The technologist will then inject a small amount of radioactive material just under the skin of the breast, next to the nipple.

- The material will need about 30 minutes to move along the path to the sentinel node. We will then use the camera to detect the radiation that the radioactive material gives off. Lie very still and breathe normally while the technologist takes the pictures. You will not feel anything.
- The procedure will take about 45 to 60 minutes.

### **AFTER THE PROCEDURE:**

- If your surgery is on the same day, we will take you back to the Pre-Surgery area to wait for your surgery.
- If your surgery is the next day, you will be able to go home.

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

- After your surgery, the surgical staff will take you to the Post-Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU or Recovery Room). When you are ready, you will be able to go home from this area.
- Before you leave, the PACU staff will give you instructions on how to care for yourself after your surgery, and what symptoms to look out for that will require immediate attention.

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

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.

### **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