Thyroid Scan

A thyroid scan checks your thyroid gland for problems. The thyroid gland is located in your neck. It speeds up or slows down most body functions.

You will be asked to swallow a pill that contains a small amount of radioactive iodine for this test. There are no side effects from taking this pill.

It helps your doctor find problems of the thyroid gland. This information will help your doctor find the right medical treatment.

This test has 3 parts. You will be given 3 appointment times. Arrive on time for each part of the test.

If you have any allergies to medicines, foods or other things, tell the staff before the test. If you are breastfeeding, pregnant or think you might be, tell the staff before the scan. For women of childbearing years, a pregnancy test is done before the scan.

To Prepare

• Do not take multi-vitamins that contain iodine for 4 weeks before the test.
• If you are taking thyroid medicine, ask your doctor when you need to stop taking it before the test.
• Do not eat or drink anything, including water, after midnight before the test and for 2 hours after you take the pill.
• Ask your doctor if you should take your medicines the day of the test. If so, take with sips of water only.
• Bring a list of all of your medicines. Be sure to include any prescription or over the counter medicines and any vitamin or herbal supplements you take.

During the test
You will have 3 appointments for this test.

Part 1

• You will get more instructions and have a chance to ask questions.
• You will be given a pill to swallow.
• You may be allowed to go home to wait.

Part 2

• About 6 hours later, you will return to have a small blood sample take from your arm. This measures the amount of radioactivity in your thyroid gland.
• This part of the test takes about 15 minutes.
3rd Appointment

- The next day, you will return to have blood taken to check the radioactivity in your thyroid gland.
- You will lie down for the scan to be done.
- During the scan, pictures of your thyroid will be taken with a camera-like machine. This will take about an hour.

Test results are sent to your doctor. Your doctor will share the results with you.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.