

If you have questions, ask your physician or nurse.

Renal Glomerular Filtration Rate Scan

A renal glomerular filtration rate (GFR) scan is a test that shows the function and blood flow of your kidneys using a radioactive tracer. The amount of radiation used in this test is small and well within limits that are not harmful to you. You will have the test in the Nuclear Medicine Department. It takes about 4 hours.

Before the test

To prepare for this test:

- Do not have any caffeinated products (such as soda, coffee, tea or chocolate) after 10 pm the night before the test.
- Eat a light breakfast, low in protein (such as oatmeal with fruit or a granola bar) 1 hour before your appointment time.
- Drink 32 ounces of clear liquid (such as water or apple juice) 1 hour before your appointment time.
- You do not need a urine sample for this test.

On the day of the test, plan to arrive 15 minutes before it is scheduled to start. Be sure to bring your:

- Physician's written order for the test if you have one
- List of allergies
- List of your current medications, (prescription, over-the-counter and herbal)
- Photo ID
- Medical insurance information
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only)

Come to the 8th floor Reception Desk in Galter Pavilion, 201 East Huron Street.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 East Huron Street, across from Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For a discounted rate, bring your parking ticket with you. You can validate your ticket at the Customer Services Desk on the 1st, 2nd or 8th floor of Feinberg and Galter pavilions, and the 1st floor of Prentice Women's Hospital.

During the test

When you arrive in the Nuclear Medicine Department, a nurse or technologist (tech) will ask you questions about your medical history.

If you think you might be pregnant or are breastfeeding, please tell the tech before the start of the test and before you are given an injection.

The tech will put an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your arm or hand. They will collect a blood sample. The tech will ask you to lie on an imaging table. They will inject a radioactive tracer through your IV. They will use a special camera to show the tracer in your body. They will take pictures of your kidneys for 15 minutes. This part of the test will show how well your left kidney is working compared with your right kidney. Then, they will take out the IV and take a 1-minute picture of that arm.

The tech will then help you move to a waiting room where you will stay for 1 hour before they collect a 2nd blood sample. After this blood sample, you will have a 2-hour break until the last part of the test.

- You can leave the department if you want to.
- Do not eat or drink anything, including water, during this break.
- Come back to the Nuclear Medicine Department in 2 hours.

When you return, the technologist will collect a 3rd blood sample from you.

Remember: Do not to eat or drink anything, including water, until all 3 blood samples have been collected.

After the test

You may go back to your normal activities and diet after the test. The radioactive tracer you were given becomes nonradioactive within hours.

Talk with your physician about your test results. You can get a copy of your test results about 1 week after the test from the Medical Records Department on the 2nd floor of Galter Pavilion.

If you have any questions about this test, please call the Nuclear Medicine Department at 312.926.2340 (TTY:711) Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 5:00 pm.