

Lung Scan Ventilation and Perfusion

A lung scan shows air moving in and out of the lungs and the flow of blood in the smallest blood vessels in the lungs. This test helps identify blood flow blockages within the lung. The exam, done in the Nuclear Medicine department, takes about 1½ hours. The amount of radiation used in this test is small and well within limits that are not harmful.

If there is a chance you could be pregnant, please tell the tech.

Before the Test

It is important to have a chest X-ray taken within 24 hours prior to the lung scan. Please contact your doctor to obtain a written order for this X-ray. You may bring the X-ray results with you to the scan, have them faxed to 312-926-8118 or mailed to:

Nuclear Medicine Department
Northwestern Memorial Hospital
Galter Pavilion
201 E. Huron St.
Room 8-154
Chicago, IL 60611-2908

There is no other special preparation for a lung scan.

On the day of the test, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your test time. Be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test.
- A list of allergies.
- A list of all your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter, and herbals).
- Medical insurance information.
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only).

Please come to the 8th floor reception desk in the Galter Pavilion, 201 E. Huron St.

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 E. Huron, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions; 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24-hour desk near the Superior entrance).

Note: Patients who have been scheduled as an “add on” may have some delays in their testing.

During the Test

When you arrive in the Nuclear Medicine area, a nurse will ask you questions about your medical history. If you think you might be pregnant or if you are breastfeeding, please tell the technologist (tech) before the start of the test.

When the test begins, you will sit in front of a special camera or lie down on an imaging table. While wearing a face mask, you will breathe a radioactive gas. The tech will ask you to take a deep breath and hold it for as long as you can, and will begin taking pictures of your lungs. When you can no longer hold your breath, you may begin to breathe normally again. You will breathe through the mask for several minutes until all the radioactive gas is gone from your lungs.

Then, as you lie down, a radioactive tracer will be injected IV (into the vein). After the injection, more pictures of your lungs will be taken from 8 different angles.

After the Test

Before you leave the department, the doctor will review the findings. A complete report will be sent to your doctor within 5 business days. (This may be delayed if the chest X-ray results have not been reported or you have not had the chest X-ray.)

You may resume your normal activities and diet after the test. The IV tracer you were given is not harmful and becomes non-radioactive within hours.

If you have any questions about this, please call the Nuclear Medicine department at 312-926-2514, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar a el departamento de representantes para pacientes al 312-926-3112.

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Developed by: Department of Nuclear Medicine

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For more information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit www.nmh.org.
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900731 (11/07)