

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. The test is done in the Nuclear Medicine Department and takes about 4 hours.

If you have questions, ask your physician or nurse.

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 exam.
- 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.
- A urine sample will not be needed for this exam.

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

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

Please 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, please bring your parking ticket with you. Your ticket can be validated 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) may 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 insert an intravenous (IV) line into a vein in your arm or hand and collect a blood sample. The tech will ask you to lie on an imaging table where a radioactive tracer will be injected through your IV. A special camera will be used to detect the tracer and take pictures of your kidneys for 6 minutes. This portion of the test will show how well your left kidney is working compared with your right kidney. The IV will then be removed, and the tech will take a 1-minute picture of your arm that was injected with the tracer.

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

- You will be allowed to leave the department if you want to do so.
- Do not eat or drink anything, including water, during this break.
- Return to the Nuclear Medicine Department in 2 hours.

When you return, the technologist will collect a third blood sample from you. Remember not to eat or drink anything, including water, until all 3 blood samples have been collected.

After the test

You may resume 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 may obtain a copy of your test results about a week after the test from the Medical Records Department, which is located on the 2nd floor of Galter Pavilion.

If you have any questions about this test, please call the Nuclear Medicine Department at 312.926.2320, TTY 312.926.6363, Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 5:00 pm.