

TESTS YOUR DOCTOR MAY ORDER



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Before the test, your doctor will likely ask about: Your medical history, medications you take, allergies, whether you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant.

Tests that your doctor may order include but are not limited to the following:

MRI (MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING)

An MRI uses magnetic waves and computers to create pictures of the inside of the body. It can make 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional images.

How long will it take?

40-90 minutes

Prior to the test

Follow your doctor's instructions regarding eating and drinking before the test. This will depend on what part of the body is being examined.

At the MRI center

- Your doctor may give you a medication to calm you if you are anxious about the test. If your doctor prescribes a sedative, you will need to arrange for a ride home. Be sure to follow your doctor's instructions on when to take the sedative. It may need to be taken 1-2 hours before the exam.

- You will be asked if you have something in your body that would interfere with the MRI, such as: pacemaker, neurostimulator, any metal, previous joint replacements or surgeries, etc.
- You will be asked to remove any metal objects or skin medication patches.
- You may be:
 - Given earplugs or headphones. The MRI machine makes a loud banging noise.
 - Given an injection of contrast dye into your vein (Let your doctor know if you have any kidney problems before having this test).

Description of the test

You will lie very still on a sliding table. Depending on your condition, you may have monitors to track your pulse, heart rate, and breathing. The table will slide into a narrow, enclosed cylinder.

Notify your doctor if you are claustrophobic or unable to lie on a flat table.

CT (COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY SCAN; COMPUTED AXIAL TOMOGRAPHY; CAT SCAN)

A CT scan uses X-ray technology to take multiple views of the inside of the body. Compared to regular X-rays, a CT scan can take clearer and more detailed images of organs, bone, soft tissue, blood vessels, and other parts of the body.

How long will it take?

About 10-15 minutes, depending on how many pictures are needed.

Prior to the test

Before your test, follow your doctor's instructions regarding any changes to your medications or diet.

At the healthcare facility

- A healthcare professional will explain the test and answer any questions you may have.
- You will remove your clothes and put on a gown or robe.
- You will remove all jewelry, hair clips, dentures, and other objects that could show on the X-rays and make the images hard to read.
- If your CT scan includes oral contrast material, you will need to drink the contrast material at this time.

- You may be given an injection of contrast dye into your vein (Let your doctor know if you have any kidney problems before having this test).

Description of the test

You will lie (usually on your back) on a movable bed. The bed will slide into the donut-shaped CT scanner. Depending on the type of scan, an IV line may be placed in your hand or arm. A saline solution and contrast material may be injected into your vein during the test. The technologist will leave the room. You will be given directions using an intercom. The machine will take a series of pictures of the area of your body that is being studied. Your bed may move slightly between pictures.



BONE SCAN

A bone scan is a test that detects areas of increased or decreased bone activity. These may indicate bone injury or disease. Radioactive isotopes and tracer chemicals are used to highlight problem areas.

How long will it take?

You will be in the scanner for 20-60 minutes. Sometimes another scan is done after 24 hours.

Prior to the test

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. You may need to discard breast milk for several days after a bone scan.

- Tell your doctor if you have recently had anything that contains barium, such as contrast dye or bismuth.
- Three hours before the scan, you will receive an injection of radioactive tracer chemicals. You should drink plenty of fluids between the time of the injection and the scan. You will also be asked to empty your bladder before the scan.

Description of the test

You will lie on your back on an imaging table. A camera above and below the table will slowly scan you. You may be asked to move into various positions as the scan is done. It is important to lie still when not

told to move. The camera will be able to detect small amounts of radioactivity in the injected material. This will allow the doctor to see areas where there may be bone injury or disease.

PET SCAN (POSITRON EMISSION TOMOGRAPHY)

A PET scan makes images that show activity in body tissues. A substance that gives off a tiny amount of radiation is injected into your body. This substance goes to the part of your body that is most active. A machine can then detect where that substance is.

How long will it take?

At least two hours

Prior to the test

- Wear comfortable clothes.
- Do not eat or drink anything, except water, for at least six hours before the scan.
- Check with your doctor about taking your regular medications.
- If you have diabetes, ask the doctor for specific diet recommendations for the test day, since this can affect your results.
- Tell your doctor if you are or might be pregnant.

Description of the test

You will be given a radioactive substance. This may be done through an injection, or in some cases, you will be asked to breathe in a gas. It will travel through your blood to the area of the body being studied. It takes 30-90 minutes for the substance to be absorbed by the tissue. When the substance has been absorbed, the scan can take place.

You will lie on a table and be moved into a machine that looks like a large, square donut. This machine detects and records the energy levels from the substance that was injected earlier. The images are viewed on a computer monitor. The scan lasts about 30-45 minutes.

These tests are painless, except for the mild discomfort of the injection.

Please call your doctor's office or Nurse Navigator if you have further questions regarding the tests.

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