

St. Luke's Imaging Services Patient/Family Information

SPECT/CT

(Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography/Computed Tomography)

What is a SPECT/CT Exam?

SPECT/CT combines two imaging techniques – Nuclear Medicine SPECT which demonstrates function and CT (computed tomography) which demonstrates detailed anatomy. SPECT shows function at the cellular level within the body, and CT shows exactly where the abnormality is located in the body.

Combining these two scans result in defined 3D images. These images will help your doctor evaluate the exact location, size and extent of the disease process – anywhere in the body.

Why is my physician requesting a SPECT/CT?

A Nuclear Medicine SPECT/CT Scan provides your doctor information about your body that is not available with other imaging methods such as x-ray, CT, or MRI.

Preparing for a SPECT/CT Scan

- Notify your doctor or technologist if you are pregnant or breast feeding.
- You will be instructed by your doctor of any preparation you may be required to complete prior to your scan.
- SPECT/CT scans require swallowing a pill and/or an injection into a vein of a small amount of a radioactive tracer.
- Some SPECT/CT exams require a delay after the injection to let the tracer circulate and localize in the area of interest. The wait time varies depending on the exam and area of interest.

Nuclear Medicine Tracer

A radioactive injection, known as a tracer, is introduced into the body and is attracted to specific organs, tissues, or bones.

The radioactive tracer is carefully selected to provide the least amount of radiation exposure, while providing appropriate imaging.

What to Expect During the Scan

- This test will take 30-60 minutes.
- You will lie down on our padded table with the SPECT camera over the area being evaluated.
- The camera detectors will be close to you and will rotate around you. The closer the camera detectors are to your body, the better the images will be.
- The SPECT/CT camera detects where the radioactive tracer is located.
- Once the scan is complete, the bed will move into the CT Scanner opening for a short time. You may hear a noise from the machine, while the imaging is occurring.

Once the scan has started it is extremely important to:

- Relax and remain as still as possible. Any movement or shift in your body may require the scan to be repeated.
- Know that you DO NOT need to hold your breath, you may breathe normally during the scan.
- Understand that the technologist will be watching you at all times and will keep you informed of what is going on.
- Know you may have a choice of listening to music, watching TV, or a DVD during the scan.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

A radiologist will review the images shortly after the exam is completed. A written report will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss the results with you. Please allow your physician the time needed to review these results.

Outpatient Instructions

Please register at the Outpatient Registration desk at the West Entrance. After registering, testing will be done in the Imaging Services department on the second floor. Please use the elevators past registration on the left.

Name _____

Exam date/time _____

