

UnityPoint Health - Finley Hospital Radiology Patient/Family Information
Nuclear Medicine Gastric Emptying Scan

What is a Gastric Emptying Exam?

A gastric emptying scan is a painless procedure used to identify abnormalities related to emptying of the stomach. Diseases that involve changes in the way the stomach contracts (motility disorders) are best diagnosed by this test. The patient is given scrambled eggs to eat in which is mixed a radioactive material. Once eaten, the clearing of this food from the stomach is directly observed with a Nuclear Medicine camera. Calculations are made at the completion of the images that will estimate the amount the stomach empties. The amount of radiation your body receives is similar to that received from standard x-rays.

Special Note

Before the exam, please tell your doctor if you are or think you may be pregnant or are nursing.

Preparation

Please bring your medication list with you to your exam.

Before arriving in the Nuclear Medicine area, the patient may not have any food or drink for a minimum of 4 hours before the time of their exam. Nothing to eat or drink after midnight before the exam is preferred.

If other exams are scheduled along with your Nuclear Medicine gastric emptying scan, you may be asked to follow other instructions. The Nuclear Medicine staff will help you understand all of your instructions.

What Happens During the Test?

You will be given a meal of two scrambled eggs, two slices of toast and one glass of water.

Once the meal is completed, images will begin immediately and will continue for two hours. You will be asked to lie perfectly still during that time.

After the Exam

You may go back to your usual diet and activity after the scan. Nuclear gastric emptying scans are safe; complications or side effects are rare. You receive only a tiny amount of radioactive material. It is eliminated or disappears from your body in one to two days.

The results are interpreted by a radiologist who specializes in the analysis of these exams. The results will be sent to your doctor who will discuss them with you.

It is important that you understand your gastric emptying scan. We encourage you to ask questions of your doctor, nurse or Nuclear Medicine personnel.

When Will I Know the Results?

The radiologist will review and interpret the scan shortly after the exam is completed. A written report will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss these results with you.

Please allow your physician the time needed to review these results.

Name: _____

Exam Date/Time: _____