

Thyroid Uptake and Scan

(Thyroid Scintiscan; Technetium Thyroid Scan)

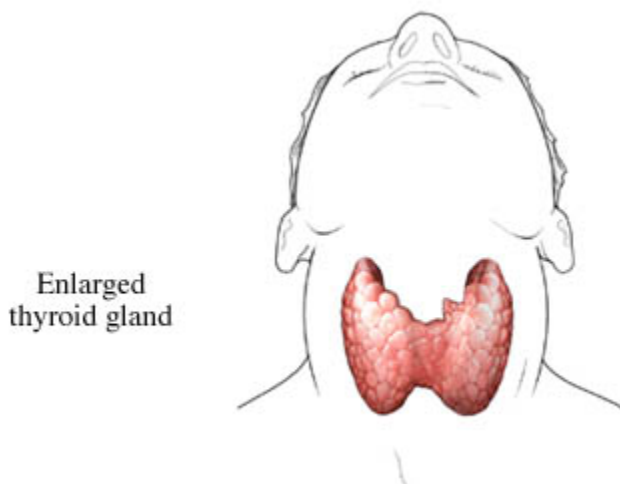
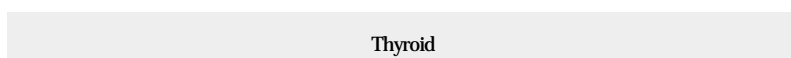
Definition

A thyroid uptake and scan is a test that uses a radioactive substance and a scanning tool to evaluate the thyroid gland. The scanner picks up where and how much the radioactive substance was absorbed by the thyroid. This helps determine the structure, location, size, and activity of the gland.

Reasons for Test

The scan may be ordered to:

- Determine the cause of an overactive thyroid (hyperthyroidism)
- Test how well the thyroid is working
- Determine if a thyroid nodule is functioning (e.g., if it is making thyroid hormone)



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Possible Complications [TOP](#)

Thyroid scans are associated with very few risks. Tell your doctor if you:

- Have an allergy to medicine or food (including iodine or shellfish)
- Are (or might be) pregnant or breastfeeding—the test could expose the baby to radiation
- Take any medicines on a regular basis—some can interfere with test results
- If you recently had any CAT scans, cardiac catheterizations, or other imaging tests that use contrast dye

What to Expect [TOP](#)

Prior to Test

- You may be asked to avoid certain food (containing iodine) or thyroid medicine before the scan. Some can interfere with the results.
- You cannot take Synthmid or Levoxyl for 4 weeks prior to test.
- You cannot have a CT scan with iodinated contrast 4 weeks prior to test.
- You cannot take Cytomel for 2 weeks prior to test.
- You cannot take vitamins that contain iodine for 1 week prior to test.
- You cannot take Tapazole, or Propylthiouracil for 3 days prior to test.
- You will be asked not to eat or drink anything after midnight.
- Your doctor may order some tests to measure the amount of thyroid hormone in your blood.

Description of Test

The procedure is done by a trained technologist in the nuclear medicine department of a hospital. You will be given a radioactive pill by mouth. Once it is absorbed you will have an uptake reading and a scan, approximately 4-5 hours later. You will lie on your back. You will be asked to lie very still at certain times. A scanner will take pictures of your thyroid. The camera is not an x-ray machine. It does not expose you to more radiation. You will need to return to the nuclear medicine department after 24 hours for another uptake reading.

After Test

You will be able to leave after the test is done.

Because of the very low dose of radioactive substance used, the majority of the radioactive substance will leave your body within a day or two. You are not at risk for exposing other people to radiation. You can interact normally with them.

How Long Will It Take?

The scan itself takes about half an hour. The radioactive substance needs time to be absorbed before the scan. You may need to wait 4-6 hours.

Will It Hurt?

There is no pain associated with a thyroid scan. There may be times when you find it uncomfortable to lie still with your head tilted backward.

Results

A radiologist will examine the pictures and determine results when the 24 hour test is completed. Based on the results of the test, further studies or treatment will be recommended.

Call Your Doctor TOP

Call your doctor if you experience any unusual pain or discomfort.

In case of an emergency, call for medical help right away. If you feel you need immediate attention and are unable to get in contact with your physician, call 911 or go to Swedish Medical Center Emergency Department or the closest emergency facility.

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