



DMSA Renal (Kidney) Scan

Our Mission

At Nicklaus Children's Hospital, it is our mission to inspire hope and promote lifelong health by providing the best care to every child. We focus on family-centered care in order to provide an optimal experience for patients and their families. We believe that parents and guardians play a vital role in the success of this test and want you to have an active role in your child's healthcare. The following information is to help you understand the test and know how to help your child.

What is a DMSA Scan?

- The DMSA renal scan is a type of "nuclear medicine" test which helps give pictures of the kidneys and how they are working.
- Nuclear medicine is a type of imaging that uses small, safe amounts of radioactive medicine to diagnose and treat diseases.
- A DMSA renal scan uses a small amount of a radiopharmaceutical called DMSA (dimercapto succinic acid). The radiopharmaceutical is safe and will not hurt your child.
- The DMSA scan does not hurt.
- Pictures take approximately a minimum of 15-20 minutes depending on how well your child holds still.
- The DMSA Scan uses a "Gamma Camera" which remains under the bed during this scan. Your child doesn't even notice it is there.

What to Expect the Day of the Exam

Step 1: Getting Ready

- A member of the Nuclear Medicine team will prepare the DMSA pharmaceutical based on of your child's weight.
- The DMSA radiopharmaceutical is given in the form of an injection.
- *In most cases, numbing medication may be used to make your child's injection more comfortable.*
- It takes at least 2 hours for the DMSA radiopharmaceutical to begin working.
- During those 2 hours, you and your child will be able to leave the department. We welcome you to enjoy the entertainment at the Michael Fux Family Center, or grab something to eat from the cafeteria or café's to help the time pass by.
- The isotope only stays radioactive for a few hours up to a day.



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Step 2: Taking Pictures

- When you return to the Nuclear Medicine room, your child will be asked to lie down on the exam bed.
- To make sure that your child is laying in the right position the technologists may move the bed around until it is in the correct position with the camera.
- The camera stays under the bed the entire scan and does not cause any pain.
- You are encouraged to stay next to your child during the scan to help keep them relaxed and holding still.

Step 3: The Results

Results will be sent to your doctor usually within 48 hours.

Child Life Specialists

A part of the Child Life Specialist's role in the Radiology Department is to help children and families cope with the anxiety and fear associated with medical procedures. A Child Life Specialist may be available on the day of the exam to provide education and coping strategies. For more information, please contact Nicklaus Children's Hospital's Children's Experiences Department at 305-666-6511 extension 4875 and select #1.