

A triple bone scan often detects early bone disease, infection or fractures before they can be seen on standard X-rays.

Triple Phase Bone Scan

A triple phase bone scan can show early bone disease, infection or fractures. In many cases, the test can detect these conditions before being seen on standard X-rays. The test is done in the Nuclear Medicine department. This bone scan uses a small amount of radioactive material (tracer) that is absorbed into the bones. The amount of radiation used in this test is small, and well within limits that are not harmful. Your total test time is about 3½ hours, but there is a 2-hour break between the first and second portions of the test.

Before the Test

There is no special preparation for this test.

On the day of the test, please come to the 8th floor reception desk in the Galter Pavilion, 201 E. Huron St., at your scheduled appointment time. Be sure to bring:

- Your doctor's written order for the test.
- Medical insurance information.
- A list of all your current medications (prescription and over-the-counter).
- Medicare card (Medicare patients only).

Parking is available for patients and visitors in the garage at 222 E. Huron, across from the Feinberg and Galter pavilions. For discounted rates, please bring your parking ticket with you. Tickets can be validated at the Customer Services Desks on the 1st and 2nd floor of the Feinberg and Galter pavilions; 1st floor of Prentice (including the Prentice 24-hour desk near the Superior entrance).

During the Test

When you arrive in the Nuclear Medicine department, a nurse or technologist (tech) will ask you questions about your medical history. *If you think you might be pregnant, please tell the tech before you are given any injection.*

You will then be given an IV (into the vein) injection of a radioactive tracer while pictures are being taken of the suspected area of fracture or infection. The tech will ask you to return to the Nuclear Medicine department about 2 to 2½ hours later. This time is needed for the tracer to localize into your bones.

After the Test

You may resume your normal activities and diet. The injection you were given is not harmful and becomes non-radioactive within hours. The test results are sent to your doctor within 48 hours of the exam. If you have any questions regarding your instructions for this test, please call the Nuclear Medicine department at 312-926-2514, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Health Information Resources

For more information, visit one of Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Health Learning Centers. These state-of-the-art health libraries are located on the third floor of the Galter Pavilion and on the first floor of the Prentice Women's Hospital. Health information professionals are available to help you find the information you need and provide you with personalized support at no charge. You may contact the Health Learning Centers by calling 312-926-LINK (5465) or by sending an e-mail to hlc@nmh.org.

For additional information about Northwestern Memorial Hospital, please visit our Web site at www.nmh.org.

Para asistencia en español, por favor llamar a el departamento de representantes para pacientes al 312-926-3112.

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Developed by: Department of Nuclear Medicine

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