

Nuclear medicine

DMSA renal scan



What is a DMSA renal scan?

A DMSA renal scan uses a special camera to take pictures of your child's kidneys.

What happens before the test?

- The nuclear medicine technologist (a person trained in taking these special pictures) will take you and your child into an exam room.
- A member of the care team will:
 - Start a small I.V. (a needle put into a vein) in your child's hand, arm or foot.
 - Give your child a special medicine, called a radiopharmaceutical (tiny amounts of a radioactive liquid), through the I.V.
- Most often, they cannot take pictures until 2 hours after your child gets the medicine. The technologist will tell you when to come back for the test.

What happens during the test?

- Your child will lie down on a special table with a safety belt over them. The nuclear medicine camera is over the table and comes close, but does not touch your child.
- Your child needs to lie very still for the test.
- The test takes about 1 hour to complete. It may take longer based on your child's needs.
- Your child may be able to watch a video or TV during the test.
- If your child cannot hold still, the care team may need to give medicine to help make them calm and sleepy for the test. They will also give you eating and drinking instructions if needed.

NOTE: You may stay with your child during the test. Brothers, sisters and pregnant mothers are not allowed in the exam room.

Are there any risks?

- Radiation in general is a risk; however, the amount of radiation used is the smallest amount possible to get the best pictures.
- The amount of radiopharmaceutical used is so small that **there is** no great risk. The dose **your child gets** is based on your child's size and weight.

What happens after the test?

- The technologist will give you any special instructions and let you know when your child can leave.
- After the test, your child may eat like normal unless your child's doctor tells you not to feed him.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

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When do I get the results?

- A pediatric radiologist, a doctor specially trained in children's imaging, looks at the pictures. Then, they will send a report to your child's doctor. They may also talk with them.
- If there is a serious problem and your child needs treatment, we will contact the doctor before you leave the Radiology department.
- Call your child's doctor if you have not heard any test results after 3 days.

How should I prepare my child?

Babies

- Bring a special blanket, toy or pacifier.
- Comfort your baby with your presence and voice.
- Bring a bottle of juice or formula to give them **after** the test.

Toddlers and preschoolers

- Young children remember things for only a short time. The best time to talk about the test is right before it is time to leave for the hospital.
- Tell your child they will have some special pictures taken, so the doctor can help them feel better.
- Use simple words, and tell the truth.
- Let your child know that you will stay with them as much as possible.
- Bring a favorite book, toy or blanket.
- Bring a snack for **after** the test.

School-age children

- School-age children have good imaginations. They may scare themselves by thinking something worse than what is really going to happen.
- One or 2 days before the test, tell your child they will have some special pictures taken of their body.
- Use simple words, and tell the truth. Try to tell them exactly what will happen.
- Let your child know that you will stay with them as much as possible.
- Bring a favorite book, toy or game.
- Bring a snack for **after** the test.

Please note: If there is a chance your child may be pregnant, tell us before the test. The care team will call the doctor to see if your child still needs the test.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.