

About Your DaTscan

What You Need to Know and Do

A DaTscan is a brain imaging test. It is used to diagnose Parkinson's disease. A small amount of radioactive material (called a tracer) will be injected into your body. The radioactive material is safe.

DaTscan imaging is a 1-day test. It takes 5 to 6 hours. You can eat and drink before testing.

Some medicines should not be taken before this test. Talk to your regular doctor about this. Your doctor can tell you which medicines you should not take before you have this test.

What should I do before my test?

- Make sure your doctor knows if you are (or could be) pregnant, or are breastfeeding.
- Let your doctor know of any medicines you are taking, including vitamins, herbs, and over-the-counter medicine. Some of them may need to be stopped in the days before the test.
- You can eat and drink before the test.

Let your technologist know if you are:

- taking any medicines
- had recent X-rays or tests that use any substances, such as barium
- have had recent surgery
- have other health problems, such as diabetes, or any allergies.

What will happen during my test?

- Your technologist will explain the test to you. He or she will answer any questions you have.
- You will get a medicine called Lugol's (SSKI) to drink. This helps to block your thyroid so the radioactive material can travel to your brain.
- You will wait 1 hour while the Lugol's medicine settles in your thyroid.
- After the 1 hour waiting period, a small amount of radioactive material will be injected into a vein in your arm or hand.
- The radioactive material must go through your body for 3 to 4 hours. You can eat and drink during this time.
- After the 3 to 4 hour waiting period, your images will be taken. This will take about 45 minutes.

What should I do after my test?

- You can go home shortly after the test. You can return to your normal activities right away.
- Your doctor will contact you and discuss the test results with you. This will probably happen a few days after the test.