

About Your HIDA Scan

What You Need to Know and Do

A hepatobiliary (HIDA) scan checks for problems in the liver, gallbladder, and bile ducts. During the test, a small amount of radioactive substance (tracer) is injected into a vein in your arm or hand. The radioactive material is safe.

Pictures are taken to track how the tracer moves through your body. The test takes about 2 hours.

We may need to take more pictures. If so, you will need to wait about 4 hours until the second set of pictures can be taken.

What should I do before my HIDA scan?

- 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.
- Don't eat, drink, or take any pain medicine for at least 6 hours before the test.

Let your technologist know if you:

- are taking any medicines
- have allergies to any medicines, such as morphine
- had recent X-rays or tests that use any substances, such as barium
- have had recent surgery
- have other health problems, such as diabetes
- could be pregnant or are breastfeeding.

What will happen during my test?

- You will lie on a table on your back. A special camera (called a scanner) will be above your abdomen.
- An intravenous (IV) tube is put into a vein in your arm or hand. The tracer is then injected through the IV tube.
- Pictures are taken as the tracer follows the movement of bile through your liver, gallbladder, bile ducts, and small intestine.
- It will take 1 to 1 ½ hours to take the pictures. You will need to lie still so the pictures are not blurry.
- You may get a substance injected through a vein that causes your gallbladder to contract and release bile.
- In some cases, pain medicine called morphine may be injected through the IV. Morphine helps move the tracer into the gallbladder.

What should I do after my test?

- If you got morphine, you will need to have a family member or friend drive you home. Morphine can make you feel tired and you should rest when you get home.
- The tracer will pass out of your body in your stool and urine within 24 hours. Drinking plenty of fluids will help the tracer pass out of your body.
- Your doctor will contact you and discuss the test results with you. This will probably happen a few days after the test.