



Lung V/Q Scan

How to prepare for your scan

A lung V/Q exam is a nuclear medicine test that produces a picture of lung ventilation and blood flow to the lungs.

This handout explains how to prepare for the exam, how the exam works, how the exam is performed, what you may feel during the exam, and how to get your results

What is a lung V/Q scan?

A lung V/Q (ventilation and quantification) nuclear medicine exam uses radioactive compounds to evaluate regional lung ventilation of airflow and regional lung blood flow. This exam is required for patients being evaluated for a lung transplant or lobectomy. It is a form of radiology, because radiation is used to capture pictures of the human body.

How does the scan work?

You will be given 2 different radioactive tracers. The first tracer will be inhaled and will show airflow to the lungs. The second tracer will be injected into your vein and will show blood flow to the lungs. The tracers collect in the lungs and gives off gamma rays. The gamma camera detects the rays and then produces pictures and measurements of the lungs.

How should I prepare for the scan?

- A recent chest X-ray will be needed.

How is the scan performed?

1. You will be given a small dose of radioactive material to breathe in through a nebulizer for 3 to 4 minutes. The technologist will instruct you how to use the nebulizer.
2. After breathing in the radioactive material, the technologist will have you lie down on a table and take pictures of your lungs.
3. After the first set of pictures, the technologist will inject another radioactive material into an IV in your arm. They will take more pictures after the injection.
4. The technologist will help make you comfortable. The imaging may take 30 to 60 minutes. You must not move during the time the camera is taking pictures. If you move, the pictures will be blurry and may have to be repeated.

Questions?

Call 206-598-6200

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC Clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

Imaging Services:
206-598-6200

What will I feel during the scan?

- Some minor discomfort during a nuclear medicine procedure may arise from the IV.
- Lying still on the exam table may be hard for some patients.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

When the test is over, the nuclear medicine doctor will review your images, prepare a written report, and discuss the results with your doctor. Your doctor will then talk with you about the results and discuss your treatment options. Talk to your doctor to find out whether or not you will need to restart any medications that you stopped for this exam.

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