

Sentinel lymph node scintigraphy





Dear Patient

On behalf of our hospital and clinic management, we would like to welcome you to the Inselspital Bern. You have been referred to the Department of Nuclear Medicine for an outpatient nuclear medicine procedure. This information leaflet contains further details on the examination preparation and procedure.

General information

Nuclear medicine involves the use of radioactive substances to conduct functional and localization diagnostics for organs, tissues and systems, and treatment using open radionuclides. Radioactive tracers are used to visualise metabolic processes which enables the diagnosis of organ dysfunction without the need for invasive procedures. Camera systems allow the function of organs or body systems to be assessed externally.



Registering for your appointment

- Please bring your Swiss health insurance card with you to your appointment.
- To register your data in the Insel system, please go to the Information Desk/ Patient Reception at the main entrance half an hour before your appointment. You will be given a number there. Once this number is called out, you will be told which cabin to go to for admission.
- Alternatively, you can register using our convenient online Patient Check-In via the Inselspital's homepage up to 48 hours before your examination appointment: www.insel.ch/check-in
- The examination will take place in the INO building, Level B. From the main entrance, follow the red dotted line on the floor to Waypoint 5. Take the elevator to Level B and then continue to follow the red dotted line to Waypoint 8 (Reception, Department of Nuclear Medicine).



Where does the examination take place?

Department of Nuclear Medicine

INO B, North

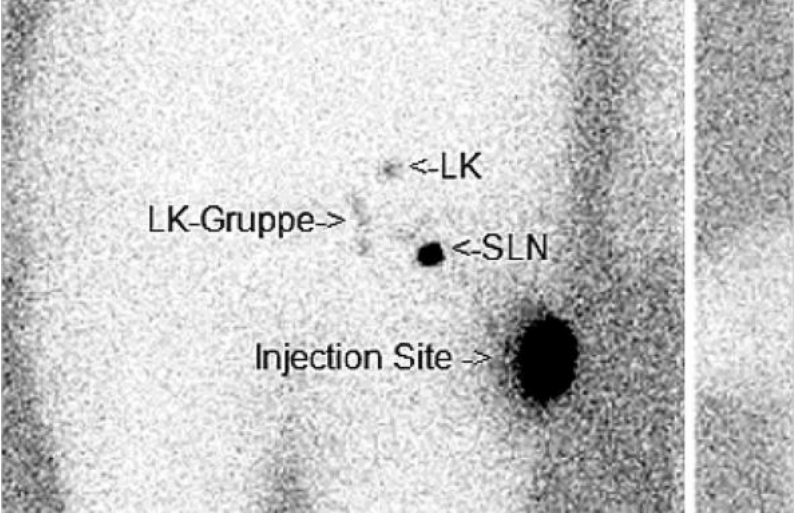
CH-3010 Bern

Tel.: 031 632 24 54, Fax: 031 632 31 37

Information on the procedure

Purpose of the examination

Tumour cells can be transported with the lymph into the lymph nodes where they can form small nests of cancer cells (metastases). The sentinel lymph node corresponds to the first lymph node that drains lymph from the area of a malignant tumour. This examination can identify the sentinel lymph nodes that monitor the area of the known (or suspected) tumour.



Examination procedure

Depending on the position of the sentinel lymph node, the examination can take between 1 to 2 hours, including preparation and breaks. First, small amounts of a radioactive substance are injected around the tumour or into the skin in the area of the tumour. This substance is transported away via the lymph vessels and accumulates in the first lymph nodes. Shortly after the injection, the initial absorption begins. Depending on the location of the tumour and the underlying problem, this can take between 30 minutes and 2 hours. The exact location of the sentinel lymph nodes is then determined using a small measuring device and marked on the skin.

Please note

Patients may leave the clinic following the injection and during the longer breaks between scans.



Preparation for the examination

No special preparations are required for the procedure.

Risks and side effects

Allergic reactions and other side effects are uncommon when administering radiopharmaceuticals, as only minimal amounts of the substance are used.

Exposure to radiation

The radiation exposure from sentinel lymph node scintigraphy is significantly less than the annual natural radiation exposure in Switzerland and is not influenced by the length of the examination.



After the examination

Following the examination, you should not use soap, deodorant or skin cream in the area of the markings on the skin. Otherwise, there are no particular instructions to follow in terms of the nuclear medicine procedure. However, there may be restrictions if surgery is planned on the same day.

Please note the following

If you need to cancel your appointment, please call to inform us (031 632 24 54) at the latest by 12:00 one working day prior to your scheduled examination. Failing this, we reserve the right to invoice you for the costs incurred.

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www.nukmed.insel.ch

