



For children having a Meckel's diverticulum scan

A Meckel's scan is a nuclear medicine test involving radiation that is used to diagnose Meckel's diverticulum. A Meckel's diverticulum is a pouch in the lower part of the small intestine. It appears during the development of the small intestine and the pouch is formed from tissue similar to that of the pancreas or stomach. The Meckel's diverticulum may release acid like the stomach, which can form ulcers and lead to gastrointestinal bleeding.

Is it safe for my child to have the scan?

For this scan it is necessary to inject a small amount of radioactive tracer, called a radiopharmaceutical, in order to take the pictures. The small risk from this radiation dose is outweighed by the information that will be gained by having the scan. Ask if you want any more information. All investigations are vetted by the Nuclear Medicine Team to make sure this is the appropriate test for your child. If you don't understand why you need to have this scan please speak to the doctor who referred you.

Preparation for your scan

If possible, your child should have nothing to eat or drink from midnight the night before the scan. Infants should be fasted for four hours prior to the scan, during this time they may drink water only.

What happens during a Meckel's scan?

Firstly, you should arrive at Kempton Day Bed Unit. This is the children's ward that will place a cannula into a vein into your child's arm or hand. Once this has been done, please come to the Medical Physics Department.

Your child will then be given a radioactive injection through the cannula, which will travel through the blood supply to the intestine. They will not feel any different after having this. The scan will take place five minutes after the injection. Your child will be lying down on the scanning bed on their back and it is very important that they stay as still as possible for the scan. For infants, they will be lying in a comfortable support. The camera will remain close to your child while we take some pictures, but it will not touch



Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent

them. The whole scan lasts one hour. You will be allowed in the scanning room for the entire test, and there will be some short breaks in between pictures.

After the scan

It is very unlikely that your child will experience any side effects after the scan, but if you think that they have please let the Medical Physics Department know. Your child may eat and drink normally once the scan has finished.

The results

The Meckel's scan will be looked at by a specialist doctor, who will issue a report. The report will be sent to the doctor who requested the scan rather than to your GP. This is because the doctor who requested the scan will have all the results from any other tests and will be able to tell you how the result of the Meckel's scan affects your child's care.

Contacting us

Medical Physics Department, Level 1 North Block, Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00pm.
If you have any questions about your child's treatment, please ask the staff looking after you or telephone 0118 322 7355 or email: rbb-tr.physics@nhs.net

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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Next review due: October 2026.

The table below is a simple guide to the levels of radiation risks for various examinations. These are measured in millisieverts (mSv).

Source of exposure (using RBFT local diagnostic reference levels (DRLs) for Nuclear Medicine)	Dose
Having a chest x-ray	0.014 mSv
Taking a transatlantic flight	0.08 mSv
Meckel's scan (Adult dose only. Children's doses are weight-based and will be up to a maximum of 5.2mSv)	5.2 mSv
UK average annual radiation dose	2.7 mSv
Average annual radon dose to people living in Cornwall	6.9 mSv