

## Medical Imaging patient information

### Nuclear Medicine

#### White Blood Cell Scan

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##### **What is a white blood cell scan?**

White blood cells are found in blood. These cells are involved with inflammation and infective processes. White cell scans are done to assess infection or inflammation. A white blood cell scan uses these cells to transport a very small amount of a radioactive tracer to sites of infection and inflammation.

##### **What preparation is required?**

Patients must be off antibiotics for at least seven days before a white cell scan can be performed. We ask that you refrain from strenuous exercise for 24 hours prior to the test.

##### **What is involved?**

You will have at least four appointments (sessions) on the same day.

First appointment: Blood will be taken from a vein in your arm. This takes only a few minutes, after which you may leave the department for a couple of hours. The technologist then performs a process in a sterile environment to extract your white blood cells. A small amount of a radioactive tracer will be attached to the white blood cells. This process takes a couple of hours.

Second appointment: Your own white blood cells (labelled with tracer) are injected into a vein in your arm. This takes 5 minutes after which, you will be able to leave the department for one hour.

Third appointment: Images will be taken to detect sites of infection or inflammation. This will take one hour. You will be able to leave the department for 1-2 hours before your fourth appointment.

Fourth appointment: A second set of images will be taken. This is usually the last part of the test and takes about one hour. Occasionally further images may be required, and you will be advised if this is the case.

##### **Are there any side effects?**

You will not feel any different following the injection. You will be able to continue with your usual daily activities. The amount of radioactivity is very small.

##### **How do I get my results?**

Digital images are immediately available to your doctor and your records will be kept permanently. This occurs through a system called PACS. **If a priority report is requested it will be issued within two hours and faxed or emailed to your doctor, however this can sometimes take up to 24 hours.** If your referring doctor wants to see you on the day of your examination, please advise the reception staff when you arrive for your appointment, so the appropriate information can be made available for you to take to your doctor.

**Please note:** If you are or think you may be pregnant or if you are breast-feeding, please tell the Nuclear Medicine staff when you make your booking for the test. It is important to bring with you your referral, previous x-rays or Nuclear Medicine tests (only if previous ones were **not** done at Cabrini or MIA). For an appointment or if you have any questions about the test please call **9508 1429**