Gastro Esophageal Reflux (GER) Scan

What is a GER scan?
GER is short for Gastro Esophageal Reflux study. This scan is done for children mainly with indications of: Vomiting, gastroparesis, esophageal reflux, failure to thrive, and poor feeding. The scan will indicate reflux and also give an idea of how well stomach contents are being emptied.

How should I prepare for a GER scan?
The patient should not eat anything overnight ideally, but 4 hours before the scan is acceptable. If on continuous G-tube feeds, 2 hours is acceptable. Any other recent nuclear medicine procedures or barium studies could be a contraindication to this exam.

How long does the test take?
A small amount of a radioactive tracer will be mixed into either formula or milk (usually brought from home). There are no side effects with the tracer and the patient will not be able to taste it. Once the patient drinks the mixture they will be imaged for 1 hour continuously. The patient will be lying flat on the scan table securely. The scanner is open on both sides and does not make any noise. A parent may stay in the room for the imaging. After completion of the hour, the results will be calculated. Based on those results another image may be obtained. This extra image would take place 2hrs from the original time the formula or milk was given and would only take 60 seconds to complete.
If patient vomits any of the radioactive meal before the end of the study, the test is usually terminated.

How soon will the scan results be available?
A radiologist will interpret the images, write a report, and deliver the results to your doctor via the internal computer system.

It is essential to tell your doctor if you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant before undergoing this scan because of radiation exposure.

If you would need to cancel your appointment please notify the Nuclear Medicine department as soon as possible at 216.444.2807.