I-123 MIBG Scan

What is an MIBG scan?
An MIBG scan is used for localization of known or suspected neuroectodermally derived tumors, including pheochromocytoma, ganglioneuroma, ganglioneuroblastoma, paraganglioma, carcinoid tumor and neuroblastoma.

How should I prepare for an MIBG scan?
Your requesting physician should prescribe Lugol’s solution, 3 drops orally three times a day, beginning 1 day prior to the administration of MIBG and continuing for 1 day after the administration of MIBG. If you have not been prescribed this from your physician contact them or be sure to let the nuclear medicine technologist aware that you have not taken any Lugol’s solution.

Many drugs may interfere with the biologic uptake of MIBG and these should be discontinued prior to the administration of MIBG. The following list of drugs are some of the more commonly encountered medications in this group and should be withheld for 24 hours before the MIBG administration: opioids, tricyclic antidepressants, sympathicomimetics, amiodarone, reserpine, guanethidine, calcium channel blockers, and ACE inhibitors. Beta blockers may be used as a temporary substitute for hypertension control if necessary. There are no diet restrictions.

How long does the test take?
There are typically 2-3 visits to the Nuclear Medicine department in order to complete this test. On your first visit a small injection of a radioactive isotope will be injected into a vein. There are no side effects to this injection. After this is complete you will be able to leave the department with a scheduled time to return the following day. When you return for your second visit there will be a series of images taken. You will be asked to remove all external metal from your body and lie onto our imaging table. First the technologist will scan your body from head to knees. This scan takes about 20 minutes. Then another set of images will be taken called a SPECT/CT. This is a tomographic image combined with a non-diagnostic CT used for attenuation correction and takes about 25 minutes.

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.

This information is provided by Cleveland Clinic and is not intended to replace the medical advice of your doctor or health care provider. Please consult your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition.