Salivary Gland Scan

What is a whole salivary gland scan?
This scan is done for detection and evaluation of duct patency, pain upon salivation, presentation of xerostomia, detection and evaluation of mass lesions, and preoperative localization of tumors.

How should I prepare for the scan?
There is no special preparation for the scan.

How long does the test take?
This scan takes approximately 45 minutes. When you arrive to the nuclear medicine department the technologist will explain the test then have you lie onto our imaging table. Your head will be place under the camera so that we are able to image your salivary glands; the sides of the camera are open. The technologist will give you an injection of a radioactive isotope into a vein in your arm. There are no side effects to this injection. We will then immediately start taking pictures for 35 minutes. It is important that you hold very still for these images. Thirty minutes into the scan you will be asked to swallow a liquid that will cause your salivary glands to empty. It will still be important that you hold your head very still during this part. We will then take images for another five minutes and then the scan will be complete.

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. This process usually takes less than 24 hours.

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.