Whole Body Bone Scan

What is a whole body bone scan?
This procedure is most commonly ordered to detect areas of abnormal bone growth due to fractures, tumors, infection, or other bone diseases.

How should I prepare for the scan?
There is no special preparation for the scan. You will be asked to hydrate before the images as long as it is not a contraindication to another procedure you are having in the same day.

How long does the test take?
A whole body bone scan takes around 3-4 hours, which includes two separate visits. In the first visit you will be given an injection of a radioactive isotope into a vein in your arm. There are no side effects to this injection. The isotope takes 2-3 hours to circulate in the blood and get absorbed in the bone. You will be given a time to return to the nuclear medicine department 2-3 hours after the injection. When you arrive for the second part you will be asked to use the restroom to empty your bladder. You will then be asked to remove all external metal and lay flat on our imaging table for a 30 minute scan from head to toe. We will then review these images with our nuclear radiologist to make sure we have all the information we need. Some additional images may be required.

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.

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.