

# **QHC Diagnostic Imaging Department**

## **Nuclear Medicine**

### **What is a Nuclear Medicine study?**

In Nuclear Medicine, small quantities of radioactive materials are injected, inhaled, or swallowed. Special cameras detect the energy released by the material to create images of your body or organ system. These computer images give us information about your organs or tissues and their function. The images are then viewed by a Nuclear Medicine Physician.

### **Who performs the Nuclear Medicine study?**

A medical radiation technologist.

### **What are some of the parts of your body that can be imaged using Nuclear Medicine?**

- Bones
- Lungs
- Kidneys
- Heart
- Thyroid
- Gallbladder/Liver

### **What happens during the procedure?**

A Nuclear Medicine Technologist will explain the procedure to you and answer all of your questions. Depending on the type of test, a radiopharmaceutical or tracer will be injected into a vein in your arm, or the tracer may be inhaled or swallowed. Images can occur immediately, hours and possibly even days later. The timing of images is dependent upon the type of organ/tissue being examined, and the length of time for the tracer to localize in that organ.

During the imaging procedure, you will be asked to either lie on a table or sit against a camera. The technologist will explain how long the images will take, and you will be asked to remain still as the images are being taken. You will not be required to hold your breath. The camera is stationary or it may revolve around you as it takes images. Once all of the necessary images are taken, the technologist will check the images with our Nuclear Medicine physicians, as they may require additional information or images.

The length of time for nuclear medicine procedures varies greatly, depending on the type of exam. Actual scanning time can take from 20 minutes to several hours, and may continue over several days.

**Should I expect any after effects as a result of this procedure?**

You may resume normal activities. Through the process of radioactive decay and your body's normal processes the radiotracer will be eliminated from your body. To reduce the time it takes for this to occur, you should drink plenty of fluids and void frequently.

**When and how will I know the results?**

Your physician will receive a written report from the Nuclear Medicine physician (specialized medical doctor). You should obtain the results from your physician. If there is an urgency, your physician is more than welcome to contact us by phone