

Flow Study Patient Instructions

What It Is

A **flow study** is a diagnostic test that uses a small amount of radioactive material (tracer) to visualize the flow of blood through the upper extremities and to evaluate the patency of your Port-a-Cath or Hickman catheter.

What to Expect

- Prior to the scan, a nurse will need to access your Port-a-Cath.
- You will be asked to remove any metal articles, such as jewelry, belts, and eyeglasses.
- You will be asked to swallow two capsules (sodium perchlorate) with a cup of water. These capsules have no side effects and will protect your thyroid from exposure to the radioactive tracer used during the scan.
- You will need to have intravenous lines placed in each of your arms. Following this process, the technologist will begin scanning and inject each intravenous line with the tracer. There are no side effects from the tracer.
- The scan will take approximately 5 minutes.
- During the scan, you will be asked to remain still and to breathe normally. Blankets and cushions will be used to make you as comfortable as possible during your scan.
- There are no side effects from the flow study.

Pregnant Women and New Mothers

- Generally, flow study is NOT performed on pregnant women. If you are pregnant or think you could be pregnant, discuss this with your physician.
- If you are breastfeeding, you should not breastfeed for **48 hours** after the scan. Nursing mothers are encouraged to pump and store milk before being injected with the radioactive tracer.

How to Find Us

Nuclear Medicine is located on level **L2** of the Dana building. To get to Nuclear Medicine from Dana-Farber's parking garage or any floor of the Yawkey Center for Cancer Care, please use one of these route options.

A. From level P2 of the parking garage:

1. Walk through the **Tomsich Family Gallery** (gene display) to reach the **Dana building**.
2. Turn left after the Tomsich Family Gallery to find the **Nuclear Medicine** reception desk.

B. From the 3rd floor of the Yawkey Center for Cancer Care:

1. Cross the **PMC Bridge** to reach the **Dana building**.
2. Take a **Dana building elevator** down to level **L2**, where you'll find the **Nuclear Medicine** reception desk.

For driving directions to Dana-Farber, visit www.dana-farber.org/directions or call **617-632-3400**.

Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns or need to reschedule your appointment, call Nuclear Medicine at **617-632-3223**.