



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust



# SeHCAT

Department of Nuclear Medicine

Patient information

## What is a SeHCAT scan?

A SeHCAT scan assesses if there is an abnormality with your bile salt absorption. Bile salts help to digest fats and eliminate toxins from the body. When bile salts are not absorbed properly, the bowel cannot function properly, causing diarrhoea.

Having a SeHCAT scan requires you to attend two appointments, seven days apart.

## Can I have a SeHCAT scan if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

If there is a possibility that you are pregnant or you are currently breastfeeding please inform the department before your appointment as we will likely have to re-schedule.

## Can I bring someone with me?

Whenever possible, please attend your appointment alone, unless you need a carer to support any additional needs.

## Do I need to stop my medication?

**If you are taking:**

- Loperamide (Immodium)
- Cholestyramine (Questran, Prevalite)
- Cholesevelam (Welchol)
- Colestipol (Colestid, Colestipid)
- Any other medications that affect bowel motility.

Please stop these the day before the test and only start again after the second scan.

## What will happen at my first appointment?

At your first appointment, you will be required to swallow a SeHCAT capsule, which contains a small amount of a radioactive tracer.



It will take a minimum of three hours for this capsule to work. You may leave the department during this time and can eat and drink normally.

When you return for your scan you do not usually have to undress but we will ask you to remove any metal objects such as phones, belts, keys.



For the scan you will be required to stand still for five minutes.

After this, the nuclear medicine technologist will ask you to wait for a few minutes while they check the images from your scan.

## What will happen at my second appointment?

To calculate the exact amount of radioactive tracer remaining in your body we will do the same scan again. This time you will not have to swallow the capsule 3 hours beforehand.

## What happens after my appointment?

After each appointment you can resume all usual activities. Eat as normal and keep well hydrated.

## When will I get my results?

The results from your scan will be sent to the consultant who referred you, normally within 10 working days. If you have any enquiries regarding your results please contact the department where the referral was originally made.

## Are there any risks with this procedure?

The radioactive tracer administered will expose you to a small amount of ionising radiation, consistent with the desired diagnostic outcome.

The risks are very low and the benefits of having the results from the procedure greatly outweigh the risk.

## Contact details

### Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH)

#### Nuclear Medicine Department

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Eastern Road, Brighton BN2 5BE

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**This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath**

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