



DEXA Bone Densitometry Preparation Requirements

For measuring bone density in the spine, you will be asked to lie on a padded table, your legs are supported on a padded box to flatten the pelvis and lumbar spine. To assess the hip, your foot is rotated inwards to obtain optimum views of the hips. You will be asked to be very still and to hold your breath for a few second while an x-ray generator located below the table sends a thin, beam of low-dose x-rays through the spine and hips which is picked up by an imaging device positioned above. Images are then displayed on a monitor. The actual scan takes 15 to 20mins to complete. Once the scan is complete the radiographer will then analyze the images. This may take up to 15mins, after which the radiologists will report on the examination.

How to prepare for the test?

You will be asked to remove some clothing and wear a gown during the examination.

Any metal objects in or on clothing must be removed as this interferes with the examination.

You should not take calcium supplements for at least 24 hours before your exam.

It is important to inform the reception staff and radiographer if you have recently had a barium contrast study, injected with an iodine contrast medium or had a radio isotope study. A DEXA study will have to be postponed for 10 -14 days.