



SMHCS Gastric Emptying 4-Hour Scan (GES)

What is a Gastric Emptying Scan?

A gastric emptying scan (GES) is a nuclear medicine exam that uses a radioactive material eaten in a meal. This material allows doctors to see problems related to how your stomach empties. This test diagnoses diseases that change the way the stomach contracts (motility disorders).

How does the scan work?

Pictures are taken over time of the movement of a radioactive meal through your stomach. A gamma camera detects the gamma rays emitting from the radioactive meal and then produces pictures and measurements of the stomach.

Where is this procedure performed?

This test is performed At Sarasota Memorial Hospital's Main Campus at 1700 Tamiami Trail on the fourth (4th) floor next to the D Elevator - located near the Arlington Street entrance, telephone number (941) 917-7234 at our outpatient facility, Institute for Advanced Medicine (AM), 5880 Rand Boulevard, off Clark Road and near I-75, telephone number: (941) 917-3658.

- Our Clark Road facility is open on Monday - Friday at 7AM.
- Our Main Campus is open for patient exams Monday – Friday at 6AM.
- Call (941) 917-7322 to schedule this exam.

How should I prepare for the scan?

- You will need to fast for 5 hours before the test – including gum and water.
- Different Nuclear Medicine Exams are to be performed at least 48 hours apart.
- If you smoke, do not smoke the morning of the test and during the hours of the test.
- Patients should check with their physicians as to whether to take their medications on the day of their test.
- Check with your doctor if you should have this test while on your stomach medications.
- Let the technologist know if you take anti-anxiety medications.
- Do not take any laxatives the day before or any time during the test.
- If you have diabetes, your fasting blood glucose should be less than 275 mg/dL for your test. Patients with diabetes should speak with their physician regarding insulin. Bring your insulin and testing equipment with you to your appointment.
- Women who are pregnant should not have this test or if breastfeeding should discuss the precautions.

How is the scan performed?

A written order from your physician is required prior to the start of your exam.

A Nuclear Medicine Technologist will review the procedure with you.

You will be given scrambled eggs that have been injected with a small dose of radioactive material, white toast, jam and water. You will be asked to eat the entire meal within 20 minutes. The eggs will not taste any different.

Tell the technologist if you are allergic to eggs.

After eating, you will be asked to stand in between two heads of the imaging camera for a 1 minute for pictures of your stomach. You must not move when the camera is taking pictures. Moving will make the pictures blurry, and they may have to be taken again.

You will be imaged, upright, once every hour for 4 hours after ingesting the meal.

You may want to bring an MP3 player, laptop, and reading material for the waiting periods.

What will I feel during the scan?

Standing still for the images may be hard for some patients. The technologist will help make you comfortable.

From start to finish, your GES will take about 4 1/2 hours. There are 5 parts to the test:

First 20 minutes: Eat meal – Each image will be done standing or sitting

- **0 hour after meal:** 1 minute of imaging
- **1 hour after meal:** 1 minute of imaging
- **2 hours after meal:** 1 minute of imaging
- **3 hours after meal:** 1 minute of imaging
- **4 hours after meal:** 1 minute of imaging

- Please note that after eating the meal, you are not allowed to eat, drink or smoke during until the test is complete. You are also not allowed to exercise or exert yourself.

- **Test duration:** The entire test will take approximately 4 hours and 30 minutes.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

A doctor with special training in nuclear medicine will review the images, prepare a written report and send the results to your doctor. The results are available within 48 hours of the procedure. You will get the results from your doctor.