



Exam Duration:	Approximately 1 hour	IV Required?	Yes
Exam Preparation:	No preparation required. Other nuclear exams performed within 2-3 days may interfere.		

Nuclear Medicine lung scans are generally used to look for the presence of a pulmonary embolus, or a blood clot in the lungs. In this capacity, the lung scan is generally used on patients in the emergency room or already admitted to the hospital. There are other indications for the exam, however, and they may be done on an out-patient basis as well.

Upon your arrival, a nuclear medicine technologist will explain the exam in detail and ask questions about your relevant medical history. In most cases, an IV will be started in your arm for later use. There are two portions of the lung scan: Ventilation and Perfusion.

Ventilation Scan: You will be taken to an imaging room where you will lie on the camera’s table, flat on your back. You will be positioned with your chest between a pair of cameras, one above and one below you. The technologist performing your exam will use a mask that covers your mouth and nose to introduce a radioactive gas into your lungs. This will allow visualization of the air flow to the different areas of each lung. There are no side effects from this exam. The gas will be removed from the air you are breathing and replaced by normal air over the course of 3-4 minutes, at which point the ventilation scan is finished.

Perfusion Scan: The technologist will give you an injection of another radioactive tracer; this one travels to the lungs through the blood and allows visualization of blood flow throughout each lung. A series of 8 images will be acquired; this portion of the exam may take anywhere from 15-40 minutes.

Once the exam is complete, out-patients may be asked to wait in the department while the images are viewed by a radiologist. This process generally does not take more than 10 minutes and ensures a quality study with accurate results. In-patients will be returned to the room once the test is finished.

Notes: Wear comfortable clothing to your appointment. As the exam requires IV access, it is best to wear a shirt that allows easy access to the arms. You will not be required to change into a gown for this exam.

