

Radiology Associates of Ithaca

"YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD RADIOLOGISTS PRACTICING WORLD CLASS IMAGING"
101 Dates Drive, Ithaca, New York 14850

DEXA Scan

Imaging (Radiology) Procedures

What is the test? A DEXA Scan measures bone mineral density and is used to determine if a person is at increased risk of fracture due to osteoporosis. This test measures bone mass precisely and safely, using a very low exposure to radiation. The sensitivity of the DEXA Scan allows for early detection of diminishing bone mass, which means patients and their physicians can take measures to effectively stop the process of osteoporosis. DEXA scans can be used to monitor response to treatment for osteoporosis by measuring the change in bone mineral density between studies.

How do I prepare? There is no special preparation needed for this test. However, patients should not take any calcium supplement the day before, or the day of, the DEXA scan. The DEXA scan should not be scheduled within one week following a nuclear medicine study, IVP, or contrast enhanced CT scan, or for one month following a barium test. If you wear clothing without metal zippers, there will be no need to change for the test.

What can I expect during the procedure? During the DEXA scan you will lie on a special table with your legs propped up on a soft support and your arms over your head or crossed high on your chest. A mechanical arm moves slowly over the area to be scanned. The lumbar spine, hip, and/or wrist may be scanned for the test. By measuring more than one area, more accurate information about your bone density can be determined. The exam is painless and takes about 15 minutes.

How and when will I get my test results? Typically, within 48 hours a written report of your test results will be sent to your referring physician, who will review them with you. Additional time (3 to 5 days) may be required if we are comparing these test results to previous findings from another hospital.

Where is the test performed? We offer DEXA scans at all three of our Imaging Services centers: Cayuga Medical Center at 101 Dates Drive; the Convenient Care Center in Ithaca on Warren Road at Arrowwood Drive, and in Cortland at the Convenient Care and Commons Imaging Center on Route 281 at Commons Avenue.