What is a DMSA Renal Scan?
A DMSA uses a special camera to take pictures of your child’s kidneys.

Can my child eat before the test?
Your child can eat before the test unless he/she is scheduled for sedation in which a nurse will contact you the day before the study regarding food and drink.

How are the pictures taken?
- Before the test begins, a small I.V. (a needle put into a vein in your child’s hand, arm, or foot) will be started.
- A special medicine called a radioisotope (tiny amounts of a radioactive liquid) is given through the I.V.
- Pictures are taken 2-3 hours after the medicine is given. The technologist will tell you when to come back for the test.
- When it is time for the test, your child will lie down on a special table with a safety belt over him. The nuclear medicine camera is under the table.
- Your child needs to lie very still. The test takes about 20 minutes to complete.
- Sedation (medicine that helps your child go to sleep for the test) may be given if your child cannot hold still.

Who performs the test?
A licensed nuclear medicine technologist will give the medicine and take the pictures.

How do I get the results?
- A pediatric radiologist, a doctor specially trained in children’s x-rays, will review the pictures.
- A report will be sent to your child’s doctor.

Are there any risks?
- Radiation in general is a risk; however the amount of radiation in the isotope used is based on your child’s size and weight. Therefore, the smallest amount possible is given to acquire the best pictures so that it poses no great risk.
- If your child receives sedation, the risks will be discussed with you before your child receives it and you will be asked to give permission (sign consent).

What happens after the test?
- The technologist will give you any special instructions and let you know when you can leave.
- After the test, your child may eat as usual unless your child’s doctor tells you not to give them anything, or he/she is scheduled for another test in which they should not eat.

NOTE: You may stay with your child during the test; however, brothers, sisters and pregnant mothers are not allowed in the exam room. If anesthesia is used, parents will not be allowed to stay in the room.

Because the radiation from this test could possibly harm an unborn child, female patients age 10 and above will be required to take a pregnancy test before the exam can be performed.
Do I need to bring anything for the test?
You may bring a favorite DVD for your child to watch during the test, or he/she may watch TV.

PREPARING MY CHILD

Infants
You can help your baby feel more secure during the test if you:
- Bring a special blanket, toy or pacifier.
- Comfort them with your presence and voice.
- Bring along a bottle of juice, formula or breast milk to give after the test is done.

Toddlers and preschool-age children
- On the day of the test, tell your child that he/she will be having some “pictures” taken so their doctor can help them feel better.
- Use simple words and be honest.
- Bring a favorite book, DVD, toy or blanket with you to the hospital.
- Bring a snack for after the test.

School-age children
- One or two days before the test, tell your child that he/she is going to the hospital to have some “pictures” taken, so the doctor can help them feel better.
- Use simple words. Be honest. Explain exactly what will happen.
- Bring along a favorite DVD, book, toy or handheld game with you to the hospital.
- Bring a snack for after the test.

Photographs/Videos
If you want to take any pictures or videos, please discuss this with the technologist before your child is taken into the exam room.