A HIDA (hepatobiliary iminodiacetic acid) scan is an imaging test that uses radioactive material to check gallbladder function and to help find problems of the gallbladder and liver. The scan creates pictures of your liver, gallbladder, biliary tract, and intestine.

Bile is a fluid made by your liver and stored in the gallbladder. This fluid helps your body digest certain foods. If there is a problem with the production or flow of bile, a HIDA scan may find the problem.

Risks
A HIDA scan has few risks but may include:
- Allergic reaction to medications used during the scan
- Bruising at the injection site
- Rash

The amount of radioactive material injected into your arm during a HIDA scan is very small. It will give off radiation for a few hours and then it becomes inactive. The gamma camera that is used to take the pictures does not give off any radiation. If you have any concerns, talk to your doctor about this.

How to Prepare for the Scan
To prepare for the scan, your doctor may ask you to:
- Fast for 6 hours before the scan. You may be allowed to drink clear liquids.
- Certain medications may interfere with the HIDA scan, so you may be asked to delay taking these.

What You Can Expect
Before the Scan
- You will lie down (usually on your back) on a table.
- An imaging agent will be injected into a vein usually in your arm.

During the Scan
- The imaging agent will travel through your bloodstream to your liver, into your gallbladder, and through your bile ducts to your small intestine.
- Pictures will be taken by a special gamma camera for at least 1 - 2 hours. In some cases more pictures may be needed up to 4 hours later.
- You will need to lie as still as possible during the scan.

After the Scan
The radioactive tracer will leave your body through your urine and stool for the next day or so. You will need to:
- Flush the toilet twice after use.
- Wash your hands well after you urinate.
- Drink water during the day to help flush the tracer from your body.

Results
The radiologist who interprets the HIDA scan will send the results to your doctor who will discuss them with you.