KUB: Kidneys, Ureters, and Bladder Scan

KUB Patient Information

What Is This Test?

A KUB is typically a single x-ray procedure. Despite its name, a KUB is not typically used to investigate pathology of the kidneys, ureters, or bladder since these structures are difficult to assess (for example, the kidneys may not be visible due to overlying bowel gas). KUB is typically used to investigate gastrointestinal conditions such as bowel obstruction, constipation, gallstones, and can detect kidney stones.

What Should I Expect?

The patient lies flat on his or her back on an x-ray table. An x-ray plate is placed underneath him or her near the small of the back, and the x-ray camera is aimed at the abdomen. The patient is asked to hold their breath and lie still while the x ray is taken. Sometimes a second KUB will be ordered, with the patient standing, or if unable to do so, lying on his side.

How Do I Get The Results?

After your KUB, the images will be looked at by a radiologist (a doctor who is specially trained in reading and interpreting X-ray images). This physician will prepare a report that is shared with your doctor (the doctor who ordered your KUB exam). Your doctor will discuss the results with you and explain what they mean. He or she can answer any questions you may have about your results at that time.

In an emergency, the results of the KUB can be available quickly. Otherwise, results are usually ready in 1-2 days. In most cases, the results cannot be given directly to the patient or family at the time of the test.