

# What do I need to know about PET?

## What is PET?

Positron Emission Tomography (PET) is a powerful imaging technique that holds great promise in the diagnosis and treatment of many diseases, particularly cancer. A non-invasive test, PET accurately images the biological function of the human body. In a single scan, your physician can examine your entire body. PET provides a more complete picture, making it easier for your doctor to diagnose the problems, determine the extent of disease, prescribe treatment, and track progress.

## Why do I need PET?

PET gives information about the body that is not available with other imaging techniques. Unlike X-rays, CT scans, or MRI, which shows the body structure, PET reveals biological function, providing your doctor with potentially life-saving insight. Because changes in metabolism occur before anatomical changes are apparent, PET often reveals illness much earlier than conventional diagnostic procedures. This may eliminate the need for ineffective or unnecessary surgeries, treatments, or other diagnostic tests. It will often significantly reduce medical costs, patient discomfort, and potential complications.

## About the Scan

You will receive an intravenous injection of a radioactive tracer and will rest quietly for approximately 35-45 minutes while the tracer is distributed throughout your body. You will then be asked to lie on a table that passes slowly through the scanner.

It is very important to remain as still as possible during the exam and to breathe normally, unless told otherwise. You may be required to keep your arms above your head during the exam.

The PET scan will take less than 50 minutes as the bed moves slowly through the scanner opening. The PET scanner detects signals from the radioactive tracer as it travels through the body and is eventually used by various organs. Although tissues in the body normally process this tracer, diseased cells will process this tracer more rapidly than healthy body tissues. It is this increase that is captured by the PET scan and determines if there are any areas of concern.

After your PET scan, the images are interpreted by a trained radiologist. Results are reported to your referring physician usually within 24 hours.

## Preparing for your scan

- Do not eat or drink anything except water for 4-6 hours before your test
- No chewing gum 24 hours prior to the exam
- Low Carb., low sugar diet 24 hours prior to the exam
- Do not exercise 48 hours prior to the exam.
- Wear comfortable clothing
- Take any prescribed medication unless instructed otherwise
- Notify your physician if you are pregnant, breast feeding, or are diabetic
- If you are diabetic bring your medication.



## Common Uses of PET

### Oncology

- Determine benign from malignant tumors in suspicious areas
- Survey the whole body for cancer that may have spread
- Monitor success of therapy
- Detect recent tumors
- Assess tumor aggressiveness

### Cardiology

- Determine what heart tissue is still alive following a suspected heart attack
- Predict success of angioplasty (balloon) or bypass surgery

### Neurology

- FDG is indicated in positron emission tomography (PET) imaging in patients for the identification of regions of abnormal glucose metabolism associated with foci of epileptic seizures

Your PET scan is scheduled for:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Please notify us of any cancellation 24 hours prior to your procedure or risk a \$500 medication fee.



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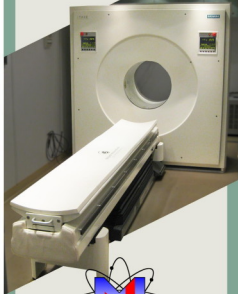
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a patient's guide to...

# PET



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