

# PET/CT

A PET, or positron emission tomography, scan is a specialized CT procedure used most often to image cancer and examine the effects of cancer therapy by characterizing biochemical changes in the cancer. PET/CT is commonly used to detect cancer, tissue metabolism and viability, the effects of a heart attack, brain abnormalities, and heart function.



## What to expect during your exam

### *The Procedure*

PET/CT uses small amounts of radioactive materials called radiotracers, a special camera and a computer to evaluate organ and tissue functions at the cellular level. The PET scan takes 30 minutes or more depending on the area under examination.

### *Positioning*

You will lie on an examination table. If necessary, a nurse or technologist will insert an intravenous (IV) catheter into a vein in your hand or arm. You will be asked to rest quietly and to avoid movement and talking.

### *Radiotracer*

PET scans only use radiotracer injections. The radiotracer typically takes about 30-60 minutes to travel through your body and be absorbed by the area under examination.

### *Contrast*

You may be asked to drink some contrast material that will localize in the intestines and help the radiologist interpreting the exam.

## Important things to mention to your technologist

Before your procedure, you may be asked to fill out a screening form asking about anything that might create a health risk or interfere with imaging. You may also undergo an interview to review your medical conditions.

### *Other Recent Exams*

Barium exam, Injection of contrast material for a CT

### *Limitations*

Recent illness, Allergies, Claustrophobia, Mobility, Weight, Cognitive functions, Any other disabilities. Notify office if you are on Neulasta or Body Injector

### *Women*

Possibility of pregnancy or breastfeeding

## What to bring with you

Photo ID  
Health insurance card  
Prescription / referral or authorization paperwork

## How to prepare for your exam

Your specific exam prep will be provided at the time of scheduling and also sent to your email address on file.

### *Eating*

The day before your exam, follow a low-carbohydrate, high-protein diet, avoiding sweets, breads, pasta, rice and cereals. Be sure to drink lots of water. Do not eat anything for at least eight hours prior to your exam, that includes chewing gum, cough drops, or mints.

### *Clothing*

No jewelry. Comfortable, loose-fitting clothing. You may be asked to change into a gown.

### *Medical*

Do not exercise within 24 hours of your scheduled PET appointment.

### *Medication*

Most medications do not interfere with this test and can be taken as usual. If you are diabetic, do not take your oral medication within six hours of your exam. Do not take your insulin medication within 12 hours of your exam and if you are on an insulin pump, disconnect four hours prior to exam.

### *Metal Objects to Avoid*

Purse, wallet, money clip, credit cards, cards with magnetic strips, electronic devices such as beepers or cell phones, hearing aids, metal jewelry, watches, pens, paper clips, keys, coins, hair barrettes, hairpins, any article of clothing that has a metal zipper, buttons, snaps, hooks, underwires, metal threads, shoes, belt buckles or safety pins.



List of current medications  
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