

POSITRON EMISSION TOMOGRAPHY / COMPUTER TOMOGRAPHY (PET/CT)

What is PET/CT?

PET stands for Positron Emission Tomography. It is an imaging technique that uses an injection of small quantities of a radioactive tracer alongside CT (Computed Tomography) which utilises x-rays to produce pictures of the body.

What is PET/CT used for?

PET/CT is used by doctors to assist the diagnosis of a range of conditions including cancer, epilepsy, dementia, infections and vascular disease. This information relates to 18F-FDG PET/CT which stands for 18F-Fluorodeoxyglucose PET/CT because this is the type of tracer used for the PET/CT examination. This tracer is similar to sugar.

How should I prepare for 18F-FDG PET/CT?

We will contact you to confirm your appointment, you should advise us if you:

- › Are diabetic
- › Are pregnant or think you might be
- › Are breast feeding
- › Are in contact with young children
- › Weigh over 100 kgs / 16 stone
- › Suffer from allergies or asthma
- › Are booked for other appointments on the same day
- › Have had or are scheduled to have chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- › Suffer from claustrophobia
- › Have a history of difficult veins to cannulate

Please let us know if you have any mobility challenges requiring additional equipment, or other special needs or requirements when making your appointment. This will ensure that we are able to offer you the highest quality service.

Before your scan

Do:

- › Drink 2-3 glasses of plain water (still and unflavoured) on the morning of your scan.
- › Take your medication as normal (unless otherwise informed).

Don't:

- › Eat or drink anything for at least 6 hours before your scan apart from the 2-3 glasses of plain water.
- › Have chewing gum, sweets or caffeine on the morning of your scan.
- › Participate in sports or strenuous activity for 24 hours before your scan.

The above DO's and DON'T's are critical to the success of your scan, so please follow the instructions carefully. Contact us if you have any queries.

On the day of your scan

Whilst you can bring a friend or relative with you on the day of the scan, we ask that you do not bring pregnant women or children to the centre.

Please note that your examination generally lasts 2 - 3 hours.

VERY IMPORTANT: It is vital that you arrive on time for your scan.

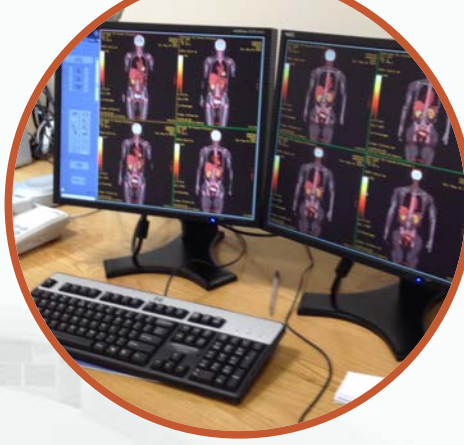
You will be given an injection that has a very short shelf-life and if you arrive late, it may no longer be effective and your scan will be cancelled. If you cannot attend the scan you must notify the PET CT Centre no later than 3:30pm the day before your scan, so that this valuable appointment can be given to someone else.

On arrival at the PET/CT unit

You will be asked to complete a few forms when you arrive, which we can assist you with if required. You might be asked to change into a gown and remove any jewellery or metallic objects. The procedure will be fully explained by one of our team who will take a brief clinical history. You will be given an opportunity to ask any questions regarding the scan if you need to. You will be given an injection of a radioactive tracer into a vein (usually in your arm). After receiving the injection you will be asked to rest comfortably for about 1 hour while the injection is absorbed into your body. The resting phase is vital to obtaining high quality PET/CT images. During this time you are not allowed to undertake any activity including reading or use of your mobile phone.

What happens during my scan?

Before your scan, you will be asked to use the toilet. You will then be taken to the scanning room and asked to lie down on the scan table. The table moves slowly and quietly during the scan, which usually takes between 20 and 40 minutes. You must remain very still during the scan. You might be given another injection during the CT part of the scan. This will depend on the type of scan you are having. The injection contains contrast or dye that allows us to visualise the organs more clearly for certain examinations.



What happens after my scan?

After your scan has been completed, you will be allowed to dress and retrieve your items. You will be offered light refreshments after the scan, but you can bring your own food, like a sandwich, if you wish. We encourage you to drink plenty of fluids in the hours following your scan to help flush the radioactive tracer out of your system. Please avoid close or prolonged contact with pregnant women or children for at least 10 hours after your injection. Practically all traces of radioactivity will be gone from your body about 10 hours after your injection.

How do I get my results?

After your scan the images are reviewed and reported by a specialist Radiologist, who will send the results directly to your consultant. Your consultant will then discuss the findings with you..

Please note that we will not be able to discuss the results with you.

Are there any side effects?

There are no known side effects from the tracer apart from the known risks of radiation. We keep the radiation dose you receive to a minimum and due to its short shelf life, the radioactive tracer will be gone from your body within about 8-10 hours. Drinking plenty of fluids after the scan will help this process.

