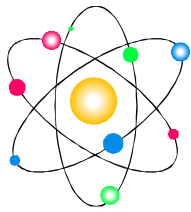


PET Scan and PET/CT Scan



UHN

Information for Patients



What is a PET scan?

A PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scan shows us how your body uses the tracer we give you. The most common PET tracer is called FDG. It is a substance like sugar. We inject it into your bloodstream and then we see where it goes and how it is used. We want to know if your body uses the tracer to build abnormal tissue.

What is a PET/CT scan?

This test combines the PET scan with a CT (Computed Tomography) scan. The CT scan gives us detailed images inside your body. We add this to what the PET scan tells us about your body tissue. Together, these tests can show us diseased tissue that we would not see on a CT scan alone.

For the CT scan, we may inject you with a contrast medium (a dye) that makes your internal structures show up better in the scan.

How long does a PET/CT scan take?

The scan takes about 30 minutes, but there is some preparation time too. You will be in the department for 2 to 2 ½ hours in total.

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What the scan is like

- When you arrive, we explain the test to you.
- We inject the FDG tracer into your arm, hand, or foot with a small needle.
- You wait in a special waiting area for 45 to 60 minutes as the FDG tracer spreads in your body.
- You go into the scanning room and lie on your back on a special bed. We make sure you are positioned correctly and the scan takes about 30 - 60 minutes.
- If we are using dye for your CT scan, we set up the line that feeds the dye into your arm during the scan.
- The bed moves in and out of the scanner. You need to lie still and follow the instructions we give you.
- When the scan is happening, we leave the room. We can still hear you and see you through a window and intercom. You may hear buzzing or clicking noises from the scanner. These are normal and you do not need to worry.

How to prepare for your PET or PET/CT scan

- Do not **NOT** eat or drink anything (including coffee, mints, or gum) for 4 to 6 hours before your scan. You can drink plain water.
- If you are diabetic, watch what you eat and drink carefully the day before the scan. Check your blood sugar level often. **Try to keep it below 150 mg/dl (or 8.3 mmol/l).**
- Diabetic patients taking their IV insulin or oral medications (e.g. metformin, glyburide, glucophage) too close to the time of the FDG injection will cause a lot of skeletal muscle to be seen in the PET scan.
- So, we can **NOT** inject FDG for at least 3 hours after you have taken any of these medications. We even prefer 4 hours.
- You can keep taking any other (non diabetic) medications that are safe to take on an empty stomach. Do **NOT** take any medication with sugar in it.
- Do **NOT** exercise hard for 3 days before your scan. (For example, you can go for a walk but do not jog.)
- Bring the results on the day of your scan for any recent imaging tests (x-rays, bone scans, MRIs, CT scans etc.) that were done at another hospital.



After your scan

- You can eat and drink as you normally would (unless you are going on to have another test that has special restrictions).
- If you were injected with dye, drink lots of fluids to help flush it out of your body.

For female patients

If you are breastfeeding or if there is any chance that you are pregnant, tell the technologist **before** you have the injection.

Your test has been scheduled

on _____

at _____.

The PET Scanner is at Princess Margaret Hospital. Please go to the 3rd Floor.

If you have any questions or concerns about the test, or if you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment, please contact the PET Scan staff at 416-946-4501 ext. 3172.