

What is a PET?

Positive Emission Tomography (PET) is an imaging procedure that when combined with Computed Tomography (CT), enables physicians to more accurately diagnose and manage diseases.

What will happen during a PET?

Upon arrival in the PET/CT department, you will complete a brief questionnaire and review the consent form for the PET scan. An intravenous (IV) will be started in your arm and you will receive an injection of radioactive tracer. There are no risks with the tracer and you will not feel any different after the injection. Prior to having the PET scan, you will relax in a private area for about 60 minutes – this allows for the tracer to be distributed throughout your body. At the end of the rest period, the IV will be removed and you will be asked to empty your bladder before having your scan.

You will lie on a comfortable imaging table that will slowly move you through the scanner. The technologist can see and hear you from the control room and will be able to talk to you during your procedure.

The scan will take about 30–45 minutes but the duration of the whole procedure is about 3 hours.

What will happen after a PET?

You can resume normal activity after the scan. The supervising physician will send the PET scan report to your physician. The results will be given to you by your physician.

How to prepare for a PET Scan?

- Nothing to eat or drink (including mints, gum or coffee) for 4 hours prior to the test. You may have plain water to drink.
- Do not exercise strenuously for 3 days prior to the scan. For example, you may go for a walk and carry out normal day to day activities but no jogging.
- Take your normal medication that you can take on an empty stomach. Do not take medication that contains sugar. Bring a list of all of the medications you are taking.
- If you are diabetic, watch your diet carefully the day before your scan.
- Wear comfortable clothing that has no metal zippers or buttons.
- Leave your jewelry at home, you won't be allowed to wear it in the scanner.