



PET Scan (Positron Emission Tomography)

Patient Information & Preparation Guide

What is a PET Scan?

A **Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Scan** is an advanced imaging test that helps your healthcare provider evaluate how your body's tissues and organs are functioning.

Unlike a standard CT or MRI, which show structure, a PET scan shows **how your cells are working**—for example, how they use glucose (sugar) for energy.

This test is commonly used to:

- Detect **cancer** and determine if it has spread
 - Evaluate **heart function** or **blood flow**
 - Assess **brain activity** for conditions such as seizures, memory disorders, or neurological diseases
 - Monitor **treatment response** or disease progression
-

How the Test Works:

- Before the scan, you'll receive a small injection of a **radioactive tracer** (a safe, low-level substance similar to glucose).
 - You'll rest quietly for about **30–60 minutes** while the tracer travels through your body.
 - During the scan, you'll lie still on a table that slides into the PET scanner.
 - The scanner detects signals from the tracer and creates detailed images of how your organs and tissues are functioning.
 - The entire process typically takes **1.5 to 2 hours**.
-

Preparation Instructions:

Please follow these instructions carefully to ensure accurate results:

No Tobacco or Caffeine 12 Hours Before the Test:

- Do **not** smoke or use any **tobacco products** for **12 hours prior** to your appointment.
- Avoid all **caffeine** (coffee, tea, soda, chocolate, or energy drinks) for **12 hours before** your test.
- Nicotine and caffeine can affect blood flow and interfere with scan accuracy.



Nothing to Eat or Drink 6 Hours Before the Appointment:

- Do **not eat or drink anything**, including **water**, for **6 hours prior** to your PET scan.
- This helps ensure your blood sugar and hydration levels are optimal for accurate imaging.

Medications:

- **Avoid taking water pills (diuretics)** before your test unless your provider instructs otherwise.
- Take other prescribed medications only if approved by your healthcare team.
- Bring a list of your current medications with you.

Clothing:

- Wear **comfortable clothing** free of metal (zippers, snaps, or underwire).
- You may be asked to change into a gown for the procedure.

After the Scan:

- You may **resume normal eating and drinking** unless otherwise instructed.
- Drink plenty of fluids to help flush the tracer from your system.
- The small amount of radioactive material will naturally leave your body within 24 hours.
- A radiologist will analyze your results, and your provider will discuss the findings with you.

If you have diabetes or are pregnant, please inform your provider before the test.

If you have any questions or need to reschedule, please contact our office at 661-324-4100.

Thank you for helping us ensure the most accurate and effective imaging for your care.