

## PET-CT - A Guide to Your Scan

Your referring specialist has decided that you should have a PET-CT scan as part of your care. This is a beneficial procedure as it provides useful information that will help to decide the most suitable type of treatment you may need.

This leaflet contains important information about the procedure, as well as some things that you will need to know and do beforehand. This will help us to ensure that everything runs smoothly for you and you get the best from your scan.

**Read this leaflet carefully and if there are any questions or concerns then call us on the number provided in your appointment letter.**

### What is a PET-CT Scan?

A PET-CT scan is made up of two types of scan or 'imaging'.

**PET** (Positron Emission Tomography) uses very small amounts of a radioactive tracer – injected into your body – which can be seen on the scan and shows how parts of your body are functioning.

**CT** (Computed Tomography) uses X-rays to produce images of the different density or thickness of organs in your body. By combining these two images, you get a very detailed and accurate internal picture which a referring specialist can use to help diagnose and if necessary, decide the most effective treatment.

### Are there Any Side Effects from the Scan?

There have been no documented side effects or reactions associated with the injection of the radioactive tracer. The small amount of radiation involved is kept to a minimum (a similar amount to other diagnostic procedures such as a CT scan).

Please remember that your referring specialist has decided that this scan is beneficial for you.

### Before Your Scan

At the time of booking your scan we will ask you the questions below. If your answers to the questions change at any time before your scan appointment, please call to let us know on the number provided in your appointment letter.



**Are you diabetic?**

**Are you pregnant, trying to get pregnant or breastfeeding?**

**Are you in contact with young children?**

**Do you suffer from allergies or asthma?**

**Do you have any additional or specific special needs? (i.e. poor mobility, continence care)**

**Do you weigh more than 100kg or 16 stone?**

**Have you had, or are you scheduled to have chemotherapy or radiotherapy?**

**Are you booked for other appointments on the day of your scan?**

**Do you have a follow-up appointment with your referring specialist?**

**Do you have to travel a long distance? (If so we can schedule a convenient time)**

These are all important questions and will help us to give you the best care and results from your scan.

We do not have facilities for minding children and kindly request that you make alternative childcare arrangements.



### On the DAY Before you Get to the Hospital



**For 6 hours before your appointment do not eat anything and drink only plain water.**

**Why?**

Prior to your scan we need you to drink plenty of plain water (approximately 4 to 5 glasses) as this helps flush the tracer we give you through your body. **Please note the fasting period may differ if you are diabetic.**



**Don't exercise**

**Why?**

You should not undertake any strenuous exercise at all for 24 hours before you have your scan. We need you to be as relaxed and rested as possible. We would recommend minimal exercise only.



**Do take your medication**

**Why?**

Unless your referring specialist has told you otherwise, you should continue to take any medicines as usual.



**Do leave valuables at home**

**Why?**

You will need to remove any jewellery or metallic objects. We can't guarantee the safety of valuables so you may want to leave them at home.



**Check with us if you are able to drive**

**Why?**

Sometimes your referring specialist will decide to give you a sedative to enhance the results of the scan. If so, we recommend that you do not drive for 24 hours. This will be discussed with you prior to your appointment.

**You can continue to go to the toilet as usual prior to your scan**

### **MOST IMPORTANTLY** Please arrive on time



**Why?**

For the procedure you will be given an injection which is produced specifically for you and has a very short shelf life. If you are late we cannot proceed with your scan.

**If you think you are going to be late, or don't think you can come – please call us on the number provided in your appointment letter as soon as possible.**

## On the DAY - the Procedure



- 1 • Following check-in at reception, you will be directed to a private preparation area
- You may be asked to change into a gown and remove jewellery or metallic objects
- You will be asked a brief medical history and the procedure will be explained. Sometimes there will be staff in supervised clinical training present, please inform the staff if you object



- 2 • You will be given an injection of a radioactive tracer
- You will need to rest and remain lying down comfortably for approximately 1 hour while the injection is absorbed into your body



- 3 • You will be requested to empty your bladder before the scan
- You will then go to the scanner room and be asked to lie on your back on the scanning bed
- The bed will move through the ring of the scanner and collect images for between 15 to 60 minutes, depending on the type of scan that you need



- 4 • You will be advised when the scan is complete and reminded of aftercare guidance

## Your Scan

CCTV cameras are used to monitor you during your uptake period and whilst you are being scanned. Please note that the CCTV cameras do not record you during these periods.

## After Your Scan



**Once the scan is complete and you have used the designated toilet, you are free to leave as soon as you feel ready**



### Don't drive

If you have had a sedative, do not drive for 24 hours following your scan.



### Drink 4-5 glasses of water

to flush any excess tracer from your kidneys.

**We recommend that you stay away from anyone who is pregnant or under 18 for about 8 hours while the radioactive tracer may still be in your system.**

## Your Results

Unfortunately, we are unable to inform you of the results immediately. Your scan will be analysed by PET-CT specialists and a report will be sent to the referrer.

## Your Feedback

In order to improve our care and the quality of service we provide, we will ask you to complete a patient questionnaire. After your scan if you are unhappy or have any concerns you can talk directly to a member of the team.

If you are still unhappy, you can make a formal complaint to our Customer Care Department on **01926 482063** or by emailing **customer@alliance.co.uk**

## Who is Alliance Medical?



## The PET-CT Team

**Radiographers/Technologists** - qualified medical specialists who are highly trained in PET-CT imaging. They will operate the equipment and administer the radioactive tracer.

**Clinical Assistant** - may be on hand to assist the imaging staff during your scan.

**Receptionist** - will greet you on arrival to the PET-CT centre and direct you to the waiting area.

## Useful Contacts

Watch a video of a scan at:  
[www.alliancemedical.co.uk/pet-ct-video](http://www.alliancemedical.co.uk/pet-ct-video)

For more information:  
[www.alliancemedical.co.uk](http://www.alliancemedical.co.uk)  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
[www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)

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