

Department of Radiology, Churchill Hospital

Your PET / CT Scan

Information for patients



Your doctor has requested that you have a PET/CT scan. This relatively simple procedure will take between 2 and 3 hours. In this leaflet we will hopefully answer most of your questions about the scan. However, if you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us on **01865 235734** or **01865 235733**.

Before your scan

Please contact us before your scan if you:

- are diabetic
- are pregnant, breastfeeding or are in contact with small children
- have any disabilities
- weigh over 100kg (16 stone)
- suffer from allergies
- are booked in for any other appointments on the same day as your scan.

Please be on time for your appointment. This is very important because the radioactive sugar that we inject has a very short shelf life. Consequently if you are late we may not be able to proceed with your scan. **If you are unable to attend or are going to be delayed, please telephone us at the earliest opportunity.**

What is a PET / CT Scan?

PET stands for Positron Emission Tomography. This is an imaging technique that uses small quantities of a radioactive tracer, usually 18Fluorodeoxyglucose (similar to sugar), to produce images that show how your body is working. CT (Computed Tomography) uses X-rays to produce cross section pictures showing the density of different organs in the body. By combining these two techniques in one scanner, we are able to provide important information to help your doctor plan an appropriate treatment for you.

Are there any side effects?

There are no known side effects from the injection of the radioactive sugar. There is a small amount of radiation involved in the procedure (a similar amount to other diagnostic procedures such as CT) but the risks associated with this are minimal. This is the equivalent of about 5 years naturally occurring ('background') radiation and is of no significant risk to you.

Any small risk is outweighed by the benefits of having the scan to help in your diagnosis and treatment.

Preparing for your scan

Please do not eat or drink anything (except water) for 6 hours before your appointment. We encourage you to drink plenty of water both before and after the scan (approximately 4 to 5 glasses), as this helps to flush the tracer through your body. You may continue to go to the toilet as usual before your scan.

Please avoid strenuous exercise for 24 hours before the scan.

It is very important that you arrive on time for your appointment. If you are unable to attend or are going to be delayed, please telephone us as soon as possible.

If you have private insurance, please bring your details with you.

What should you wear?

We suggest that you wear something loose and comfortable. As part of the examination includes a CT scan, it is important that you are not wearing any metal, including jewellery, zips and bra hooks. A watch may be removed at the time of the scan.

When you arrive at the hospital

Please come to the **Nuclear Medicine Department Reception, Ground Floor, Surgery & Diagnostic Building**, Churchill Hospital. The procedure will be fully explained by a technologist, who will also take a brief clinical history.

Administration of the tracer

In order for us to obtain images of your body, we need to give you an injection of radioactive sugar into a vein – usually your arm. This is similar to a blood test. There are no side effects from the injection and it will not make you feel any different. After receiving the injection you will need to rest and remain lying down for 1½ hours while the injection is absorbed into your body.

What happens during the scan?

Once the radioactive tracer has been absorbed into the body, you are ready for your scan. In the scanning room, you will be asked to lie down on your back on the scanning bed. The scanner is an open ring-like structure which

resembles a giant doughnut. The bed will move through the ring of the scanner and collect images for between 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the type of scan that you need. You breathe normally throughout the scan – there are no instructions to follow.

After your scan

After the scan has been completed you are free to leave immediately. We recommend that you don't have close contact with pregnant women or young children for 6 hours after the scan. You are encouraged to drink plenty of fluids of any type as this will help flush any excess tracer through your kidneys.

Your images will be analysed by a Consultant Radiologist specialising in PET/CT, who will send a report to the doctor who requested your scan.

Your appointment time

Patient name:

Date of scan: Arrival time:

Questions / How to contact us

For more information, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our PET team at:

Radiology Department

Churchill Hospital

Headington Oxford OX3 7LE

Tel: **01865 235734** or **235733** Fax: 01865 235005

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

Version 4, July 2012

Review, July 2015

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust
Oxford OX3 9DU

www.ouh.nhs.uk/patientinformation

OMI 4374P