

TESTfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®



PET/CT Infection/Oncology Scan

What is a PET/CT Scan?

Your doctor has suggested you/your child have a PET/CT scan as part of the evaluation at National Jewish. A PET scan is a shortened name for positron emission tomography. A PET scan views functioning tissues in the body. A CT or CAT scan is a shortened name for computerized tomography. A CT scan takes pictures of the inside of the body. The pictures are more detailed than a typical x-ray. A PET scan combined with a CT scan shows detailed images and functioning tissues within the body.

A PET/CT scan can help determine a diagnosis early. Your doctor will use this information to determine the best treatment for you.

How do you get ready for the test?

- ✓ You should **not** be extremely active the day before the PET/CT scan. This means no running, no swimming and no exercise. Please be sedentary on the day before your test.
- ✓ **Do not eat or drink for 6 hours before the test is scheduled. You/your child may drink water only.**
- ✓ You will remove all metal.
- ✓ Please refrain from wearing clothes with snaps or multiple zippers and do not wear jewelry.
- ✓ Let the technologist know if you are pregnant or nursing.

What is done during the test?

The Nuclear Medicine Technologist will explain the PET/CT scan to you before you start. Ask questions if you don't understand.

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The technologist will start an IV. You will feel a prick when the IV is started. The technologist will collect a blood sample to test your glucose level using a glucometer. The IV will be used to give you a liquid radiopharmaceutical. This will help view the functioning tissues during the scan. The IV is removed after injection.

You will wait for 1 hour after you are given the liquid radiopharmaceutical in your IV. You will sit quietly in a recliner.

After 1 hour you will have the PET/CT scan. The PET/CT scan does not hurt. During the PET/CT scan you will lie still on a padded table. The technologist will give you instructions during the test. You will be asked to raise your arms above your head during the scan.

Young children may have trouble lying still during the PET/CT scan. If this is the case the child may be given medicine to make him or her sleepy first. This is done in the Pediatric Care Unit. If this is done first, a nurse will also be at the PET/CT scan. If you are concerned your young child may not be able to hold still talk with your doctor before the PET/CT scan.

What should you do after the test?

You can resume normal activities after the PET/CT scan.

How long will the test take?

A PET/CT scan takes about 2 hours.

How do you get to your test?

Your appointment is in the Institute for Advanced Biomedical Imaging (Radiology). You will be directed where to go when you check-in. If you have any questions you can contact Advanced Biomedical Imaging (Radiology) at 303-398-1611.