

What is PET CT?

PET (Positron Emission Tomography) and CT (Computed Tomography) are both standard imaging tools that physicians use to pinpoint disease in the body. The PET scan demonstrates the biological function of the body before anatomical changes take place, while the CT scan provides information about the body's anatomy such as size, shape and location. By combining these two technologies, physicians can more accurately diagnose and identify cancer and brain disorders.



Why do I need PET CT?

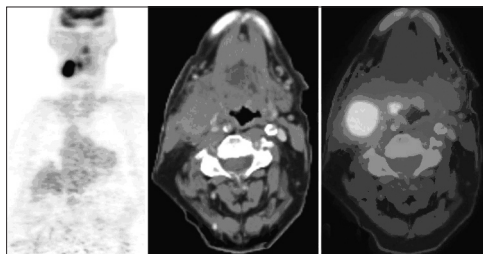
PET CT is a powerful imaging technique that holds great promise in the diagnosis and treatment of many diseases, particularly cancer. A non-invasive test, PET CT accurately images metabolic and anatomic information in the human body in a single scan. This allows your physician to examine your entire body at once. PET CT provides a more complete picture, making it easier for your physician to diagnose problems, determine the extent of disease, prescribe treatment and track progress.

About your scan

A PET CT scan is completely painless, with no side effects. After fasting approximately four to six hours, you will receive an intravenous injection of a radioactive glucose. Following the injection you will rest quietly for approximately 60 to 90 minutes, while the glucose is distributed throughout the body.

After the distribution time is complete, you will then be asked to lie on a table that slowly passes through the scanner.

After the organ being studied processes the radioactive glucose and the scanner records the information, a trained radiologist interprets the images. Results are reported to your physician usually within 24 hours.



PET scan

CT scan

PET CT scan

Medicare covers PET CT scanning for many uses, including breast, lung, colorectal, esophageal, melanoma, lymphoma, thyroid and head and neck cancers. Most private insurers cover PET CT scans as well. Check with your physician about your insurance coverage. Some private insurers require precertification.



IMAGING SERVICES

Education

Preparing for your scan

- Do not eat or drink anything other than water for four to six hours before your test.
- Wear comfortable clothing.
- Take any prescribed medication unless instructed otherwise.
- Notify your physician if you are pregnant, breastfeeding or diabetic.

Common uses of PET CT

Oncology

- Determine benign from malignant tumor in suspicious areas
- Survey whole body for cancer that may have spread
- Monitor success of therapy
- Detect recurrent tumors
- Assess tumor aggressiveness

Neurology

- Dementia – detect Alzheimer’s and other dementia
- Epilepsy – assist in seizure localization
- Parkinson’s – diagnose movement disorders