

WHAT IS A PET-CT EXAM?

A PET (positron emission tomography) scan creates an image of your body's metabolic activity and shows the rate at which your body's cells break down and use sugar (glucose). This is done by injecting a small amount of radioactive material into your bloodstream and waiting for it to disperse to the area of focus. The PET scan pictures are then performed to detect the radioisotope to create an image on the computer screen.

A PET/CT combines the functional information from a PET scan with the anatomical information from a CT scan. When a CT scan is placed over a PET scan, doctors can pinpoint the exact location of abnormal activity. They can also see the level and extent of that activity. Even when an abnormal growth is not yet visible on a CT scan, the PET scan may show the abnormal activity. PET/CT scans are commonly used to find changes in the body during the early stages of the disease and for staging and restaging of cancers.

Safety: The dose of radiotracer administered is small, resulting in minimal radiation exposure. Nuclear medicine has been used for more than five decades and there are no known long-term adverse effects from such low-dose exposure. Allergic reactions to radiopharmaceuticals may occur but are extremely rare.

Female patients: Female patients' between the ages of 10 and 55 will be required to provide a urine sample upon arrival. Women should always inform their physician or technologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant or if they are breastfeeding.

MISSION

A world free of cancer

VISION

To lead in transformative cancer care, research and education through courage, commitment and compassion

You will receive a phone call the day before your scheduled PET scan from a Karmanos PET technologist to review your exam and any questions/concerns you may have.

If you need to contact the PET/CT department, call:

(313) 576-9922 (Detroit Location)
(866) 855-5498 (Weisberg Location).

If you need to cancel or reschedule your PET/CT exam, please call
1-800-KARMANOS.

BARBARA ANN
KARMANOS CANCER INSTITUTE
4100 John R, Detroit, MI 48201

WEISBERG CANCER TREATMENT CENTER
31995 Northwestern Highway
Farmington Hills, MI 48334



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PET/CT EXAMINATION



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CANCER INSTITUTE
Wayne State University

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PREPARATION BEFORE YOUR PET/CT SCAN

- **Food and drink:** Do NOT eat or drink anything for at least 6 hours before the exam. You can drink as much plain water as you like. If your physician has told you to take your regular pill medicine, take it with plain water. Do not take any liquid medication. Do NOT eat or chew candies, gum, mints, cough drops, etc.
- **Diabetic patients:** Do NOT eat or drink anything for at least 6 hours prior to your scan. Avoid eating high-carb or high-sugar food/drink the day before your test. You can drink as much plain water as you like. Take your diabetic pill medication as usual before the test, but ONLY with plain water NO FOOD (or you can wait until your test is over to take your medicine with food). If you take insulin, your last dose needs to be taken at least 4 hours before the exam. Please let us know if your blood sugar usually runs above 150 mg/dL. Check your blood sugar at home before arriving for your test. Your blood sugar needs to be BELOW 200 mg/dL for the test or you will be rescheduled.

- **Claustrophobic patients:** Most claustrophobic patients can tolerate a PET scan. Talk to your physician if you think you need some additional anti-anxiety medication for the scan BEFORE your appointment. We cannot prescribe or supply medication on the day of your test.
- **Exercise:** Do not exercise for at least 24 hours before the exam.
- **COVID-19 vaccine:** If you received a COVID-19 vaccine or booster in the past 4-6 weeks, please let one of the technologists know. We will contact your ordering doctor regarding scheduling your PET scan.
- **When to arrive:** For Karmanos patients, please check in 30 minutes before your appointment time in the Karmanos lobby. A receptionist will register you for your scan and a navigator will bring you to the PET scan department. For pediatric patients, please check in 30 minutes before your appointment time and enter through Children's Hospital of Michigan's main lobby. Do not register for your test. Come directly to the PET scan department located on the ground floor.
- **What to wear:** Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothes with no metal (buttons, zippers, underwire bras, etc.). Dress in layers, it may be cold in the scanning area. Leave your watch, jewelry, and other valuables at home.
- **Intravenous preparation:** The technologist will place an IV in your arm or hand prior to the test. We can also access your port if we have a nurse available. Before coming to your appointment, please let us know if you would like your port accessed and apply LMX cream 1 hour before arrival.

DURING A PET/CT EXAM:

- **Scanning:** You will be required to lie flat on your back with your arms raised above your head. If you think you will be unable to keep your arms above your head for approximately 35 minutes, please notify the technologist. You will not be able to move or talk during your images.
- **Length of exam:** You should plan to be here for approximately 2-3 hours. The actual scanning and preparation time varies with the type of scan you are having but is usually around 25 to 60 minutes.

AFTER A PET/CT EXAM:

- **Instructions:** You can drive and resume normal activities immediately after leaving unless you have taken medication to relax you. You must drink as much water or fluids as possible for the rest of the day and empty your bladder as often as possible. This will result in a more rapid clearance of radioactivity from your body.
- **Exam results:** All PET/CT exams are interpreted by a radiologist. Your referring physician will communicate these results to you at a later appointment.

