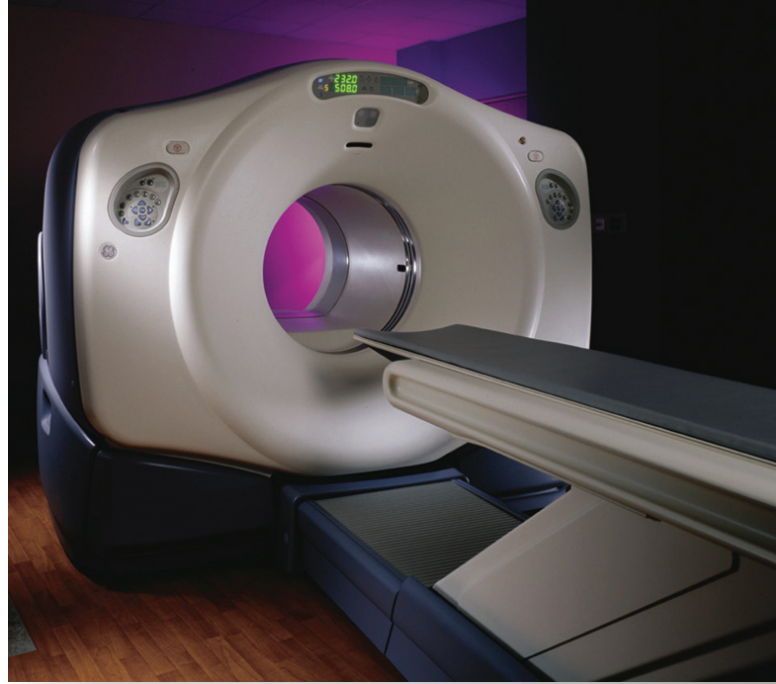


## Prior To Your PET/CT Scan

- Hydrate well with water.
- Avoid sugars in your diet as much as possible.
- Refrain from physical activity 24 hours prior to scan.
- Take medications as prescribed.
- Diabetics: Please make sure that the PET/CT staff knows that you are diabetic. Call (814) 838-0491.
- Do not eat or drink anything except plain water for 6 hours prior to your scheduled arrival time. This includes chewing gum, candy, cough drops, mints, vitamins and cough syrup. If you are a diabetic, fast for 4 hours.
- Dress comfortably and warmly. Scanner rooms can sometimes be cool. **DO NOT WEAR JEWELRY OR METAL ON CLOTHES.**

## What to Expect from Your PET/CT Scan

- Plan on being in the PET department for 2 hours to 2 1/2 hours.
- To begin the scanning process you will receive an injection and be asked to sit quietly in a room for 1 hour. Reading and cell phone use is not allowed during this time. I-pod use is permitted.
- The PET scan itself is completely painless and has no side effects.
- Following the quiet time you will be asked to empty your bladder, and then lie down on a scanner bed.
- Be prepared to lie still for 30-40 minutes while the scan is performed.
- Images will be taken of your body as you lie still on the scanner bed.
- Test results will take up to a week to be processed and analyzed. Test results are reviewed at your next appointment or can sometimes be given to you by telephone. If you do not have an appointment scheduled with your ordering physician, please contact him/her one week following your scan to receive the results.
- When the PET scan is done, make sure to drink plenty of water or other fluids throughout the day.



## Your physician has referred you for a PET/CT exam.

Please take a few minutes to read this information on PET/CT to help you understand and prepare for your exam. Your physician and nurses will also be able to answer additional questions you may have about your exam.



In affiliation with  
UPMC CancerCenter

Experts.  
Compassion.  
Hope Close to Home.

2500 W 12<sup>th</sup> Street Erie, PA 16505  
(814) 838-9000 | [www.trcc.org](http://www.trcc.org)

Follow us for healthy living tips, recipes, and events.



## What is PET/CT?

PET/CT combines the functional information from a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) exam with the anatomical information from a Computed Tomography (CT) exam into one single exam.

A PET scan detects changes in cellular function – how your cells are utilizing nutrients like sugar and oxygen. Since these functional changes take place before physical changes occur, PET can provide information that enables your physician to make an early diagnosis.

A CT scan uses a combination of X-rays and computers to give the radiologist a non-invasive way to see inside your body. One advantage of CT is its ability to rapidly acquire two-dimensional pictures of your anatomy. Using a computer, these 2D images can be presented in 3D for in-depth clinical evaluation.

The PET exam pinpoints metabolic activity in cells and the CT exam provides an anatomical reference. When these two scans are fused together, your physician can view metabolic changes in the proper anatomical context of your body.

## Why do I need this exam?

Your PET/CT exam results may have a major impact on your physician's diagnosis of a potential health problem and, should an abnormality be detected, how a treatment plan is developed and managed.

A PET/CT exam not only helps your physician diagnose a problem, it also helps predict the likely outcome of various therapeutic alternatives, pinpoint the best approach to treatment, and monitor your progress. If you are not responding as well as expected, you can be switched to a more effective therapy immediately.

## What should I expect when I arrive?

When you arrive, we will review your history and any past exams. For the PET portion of the exam you will receive a radiopharmaceutical injection. This is a radioactive tracer that must pass multiple quality control measures before it is used for any patient injection. A very small amount of the radiopharmaceutical is injected into your body. Because of the rapid decay of the radiopharmaceutical, very little activity will remain in the body after the imaging series.

For most studies, you will have to wait 1 hour between injection and your scan for the radiopharmaceutical to distribute through your body. During this time, you will be asked to relax in a quiet room by yourself. We ask that

all family members remain in our waiting room. Reading materials and cell phones cannot be used during this quiet time. Your physician may order non-barium oral contrast for you to drink during your 1 hour quiet time.

## What will the scan be like?

You will lie on a table that will move slowly through a circular-shaped PET/CT scanner as it acquires the information needed to generate diagnostic images. The unit looks similar to a CT scanner. You will be asked to lie very still during the scan because movement can interfere with the results. For the CT scan you may be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds to minimize body movements. Your physician may order an injection of non-toxic contrast during a portion of your scan to enhance images. During the scan, you might hear a humming noise but you will not feel anything. You may feel the table move while images are being taken at certain locations on your body. The technologist will monitor you during the exam.

## How long will all this take?

The initial patient preparation for the PET/CT scan typically lasts 30 minutes, following this preparation time is a 1 hour quiet time. You will be in a private room for the 1 hour quiet time, immediately following this quiet time is a 30 to 45 minute scan. The exam procedure can vary considering each patient's individual needs. Plan to spend approximately 2 to 2.5 hours in total with us.

## What happens after the exam?

You may leave as soon as the exam is complete. Unless you have received special instructions, you will be able to eat and drink immediately. Drinking fluids soon after the exam will help remove any of the radiopharmaceutical that may still be in your system. In the meantime, we will begin preparing the results of your exam for review by one of our onsite Radiologists. Once dictated and transcribed the results will be sent to your physician who will tell you the outcome of your study. Results take up to 1 week to be processed and analyzed.

## Safety of PET/CT exams

Be assured that PET/CT exams are a safe and effective diagnostic procedure. A very small amount of PET radio-pharmaceuticals are injected and they lose their radioactivity in several hours time.