



PET/CT: Preparation and Procedure

Next-generation technology for precise diagnosis and effective therapy.



PREPARATION FOR A PET/CT SCAN

The scan is performed on an empty stomach

- 48 hours before the scan: Avoid alcohol and any alcohol-containing medications.
- 24 hours before the scan: Follow a low-carbohydrate diet. Avoid sweets, flour products, vegetables, fruits, grains, and milk. You may eat cottage cheese or other fermented milk products, boiled lean meat, and boiled fish.
- On the day of the scan: The procedure must be performed on an empty stomach. The last meal should be at least 6 hours before the scan.
- Drink plenty of fluids such as water, black coffee, or tea without milk or sugar. Drink only still, unsweetened water.
- On the evening before an 18F-FDG PET/CT scan, a light, carbohydrate-free dinner and plenty of warm still water are recommended.
- After the injection of the radiopharmaceutical, it is very important to drink a large amount of water — the quality of imaging depends on it.

Consult with your doctor

People with diabetes who are planning to undergo a PET/CT scan should consult with their attending physician or a PET/CT diagnostics specialist to avoid inaccurate results or complications during the procedure.

Avoid hypothermia

For 36 hours before the PET/CT scan, keep warm and avoid getting cold to prevent activation of metabolic processes in fat tissue, as this can interfere with the diagnostic accuracy.

Allergies and pregnancy

You must inform your nuclear medicine specialist if you have any known allergies to medications (such as iodine-based contrast agents, antibiotics, or anesthetics), and if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Additional information

Please bring copies of your previous imaging studies (Ultrasound, CT, MRI, PET/CT) and any information about ongoing radiation therapy or chemotherapy, if applicable.

Also bring all medical documents related to your condition — discharge summaries, examination reports, test results, and image discs — and present them to your specialist at our center.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR PET/CT

- Original identification document: ID card or passport
- Form 027 medical record extract and referral letter from your oncologist
- Referral from your local polyclinic via the DAMUMED portal
- Recent blood test results for Creatinine and Urea (valid for 10 days)
- If you have been diagnosed with thyroid cancer, please provide the following six test results (valid for no more than 10 days):
 - TSH, Thyroglobulin, Calcitonin, CEA, Creatinine, and Urea.
- Postoperative discharge summaries and reports from your most recent chemotherapy or radiation therapy
- Recent CT, MRI, Ultrasound, and PET/CT reports and image discs
- If you have previously undergone a PET/CT scan, please bring the disc for comparison with current results
- Comfortable clothing (without metal parts), socks, and shoes

HOW IS THE PET/CT SCAN PERFORMED?

- Once the doctor confirms you are ready for the scan, a radiopharmaceutical will be injected to assess your body's metabolic activity.
- The procedure is safe and painless, though a mild sensation of warmth may occur in rare cases.
- Right after the injection, you will need to drink plenty of water, as the quality of the diagnostic images depends on it.

It takes up to **60 minutes** for the tracer to distribute throughout the organs and tissues and accumulate in the pathological focus.

During this time, the patient must **lie still and not talk**, so that the tumor tissue, where more of the tracer accumulates due to increased metabolism, will be highlighted with the most contrast during the scan.

AFTER THE TRACER HAS DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE BODY, THE SCAN IS PERFORMED.

HOW LONG IS THE RECOVERY PERIOD AFTER A PET/CT SCAN?

The recovery period begins after the PET/CT scan is completed and lasts up to 24 hours. During this time, the radioactive tracers completely decay. The tracer is eliminated through urine, and this elimination process can be accelerated with special measures.

REQUIREMENTS AFTER A PET/CT SCAN

After the injection of the radiopharmaceutical (RFP) and until it decays and is eliminated from the body, the patient is a source of radiation. Therefore, after the PET/CT scan and until the next morning, we strongly request the following:

- Do not visit or linger in public places where there are crowds of people;
- Do not have contact with children or pregnant women, and minimize contact with other people;
- Try to maintain a distance of at least 1 meter from family members.

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