

UNITED HOSPITAL CENTER

PATIENT EDUCATION

POSITRON EMISSION TOMOGRAPHY (PET/CT)

Your physician has referred you to the Diagnostic Services Department at United hospital Center for a Positron Emission Tomography/Computed Tomography procedure. PET/CT is a nuclear medicine procedure that produces pictures of the body's biological functions. PET/CT is capable of detecting certain diseases before other imaging modalities such as Computed Tomography (CT) and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) because PET/CT is able to capture chemical and physiological changes related to metabolism, as opposed to gross anatomy and structure, which is obtained by CT and MRI. This is important since functional changes are often present before structural changes in tissues. PET/CT images may therefore demonstrate pathological changes long before they would be evident in CT or MRI.

Why should you have a PET/CT examination?

- It's painless and safe
- Differentiates between malignant and non-malignant tumors
- Reduces or eliminates ineffective unnecessary treatment
- Accurately assesses the location and stage of the malignant disease
- Replaces multiple testing procedures
- Provides earlier detection of recurrent cancer
- Monitors the efficiency of patient care and malignant disease

How should you prepare for the PET/CT examination?

- Wear comfortable clothes
- DO NOT** eat or drink anything 8 hours prior to exam; except plain water
- Do not wear jewelry
- Ash Technologist about medications you can and cannot take
- Stop all physical exercise 24 hours prior to exam.
- Bring all medication with you or a list of medications
- DO NOT** bring children or pregnant women with you to appointment
- Bring any biopsy or CEA reports where applicable
- If you are diabetic do not take insulin or pills 6 hours prior to appointment
- You **CAN NOT** have sugar or natural sugar, such as found in fruit and fruit drinks the day of Appointment

Before the scan, you will receive a small injection of radioactive sugar (FDG). You should feel no side effects resulting from the injection. You will be asked to rest for approximately 90 minutes while the radioactive compound distributes throughout your body, and is processed by the organs being evaluated. The radiation exposure associated with PET/CT is safe and much lower than that associated with conventional CT scanning.

You will be asked to lie on the scanner table, the scan takes 30 to 60 minutes depending on height and weight, and you will slowly pass through the scanner. The CT portion of the exam is completed first followed by the PET portion. When the total scan is finished, the computer will produce images for the radiologist to review. A report will be sent to your physician who will discuss your test results with you. The interpreting physician reads the images and sends a report to your physician. Your physician will discuss your test results with you.

Length: Approximately 2-3 Hours

If you are nursing or pregnant (or think you might be) tell your physician and the technologist BEFORE your scan.

Once the total scan has been performed, you may resume normal daily activity. Even though the FDG will quickly leave your body, you can expedite the process by drinking plenty of water after your scan is complete. Do not be around children or pregnant women 6 hours post scan.

DISCLAIMER: The content contained in this patient education is presented solely with the intent of providing public service information on health and health-related issues. This information is neither intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Always consult your physician or other qualified health provider prior to utilizing any of the information presented in this patient education. UHC makes no warranty, representation or guaranty as to the content accuracy, timeliness or completeness of the information presented in this patient education or that the information may be relied upon for any reason

