

PSMA PET/CT

Patient information

What is a PSMA PET/CT scan?

A PET/CT is a fusion of functional (PET) imaging combined with CT (anatomical) imaging. PET/CT provides quantitative metabolic information about the whole body.

A PSMA scan is a particular PET study that uses a radioactive tracer specific to prostate cancer cells. It is used in the staging of newly diagnosed prostate cancer and also in patients who have suspected recurrence after previous treatment.

Preparation

- it is important you are hydrated - plain water only (1 litre in the 2 hours prior to scan unless you have a medical condition that requires you to restrict your daily fluid intake) - this helps with scan quality and with locating a vein
- if a diagnostic CT is also requested, you will need to fast from solids for 6 hours prior to your appointment (no smoking, mints or chewing gum)
- medications may be taken as normal
- if you are claustrophobic, please advise staff when booking.
- Stay warm before your scan and wear comfortable and warm clothing; avoid metal zips/buttons. Leave all jewellery at home.
- No phone calls are to be made or received during your time in the department

What will happen during the examination?

On arrival, a cannula will be inserted into a vein in your arm. The PET/CT scan involves an injection of a radioactive tracer through the cannula.

After the injection, you will rest in a quiet room for about 90 minutes before the scan. It takes this time for the tracer to accumulate in metabolically active areas and clear from the rest of the bloodstream. The injection has no side effects. You will need to remain relaxed and limit movement, a television is available to watch in the room.

We usually image from head to thighs, which takes approximately 20 minutes. Depending on your history, your doctor may also request you to have a diagnostic CT, which is performed on the same camera. If your CT study requires contrast, this will be discussed with you before the scan.

After the examination

Our radiologist will review and report on your images and we will deliver them electronically to your doctor.

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