

PET Scan (brain only) Patient Instructions

How to Prepare

- **Do not eat or drink anything except plain, unflavored water within 6 hours of your appointment.** (If you are diabetic, please see instructions below for diabetic patients.)
- **Avoid heavy physical activity**, such as running, working out, sports, yoga, and deep massages, in the **24 hours** before your scan.
- **Drink 1-2 cups of plain water** (not sports drinks or flavored water) before the scan.
- Take any prescription medications at the normal time (unless you are diabetic; see below).
- **IMPORTANT: Do not take liquid medications containing sugars or artificial flavoring during the fasting period.** If you will be taking Valium, Ativan, or any medication that may impair your ability to drive, you **MUST** have a plan to get home without driving.

Diabetic Patients

- **If you are diabetic, do not eat or drink anything except plain unflavored water within 4 hours of your appointment.** High or low glucose levels can affect the PET scan result.
- Please schedule your appointment for a time of day when your blood glucose would usually be less than 150.
- If you take insulin or oral medications that increase insulin release, schedule the scan so that you will not need to take insulin or oral medications within 4 hours of your appointment. Other anti-diabetic medications should be taken when you normally would. Our nurses can help you with this.
- If you have a glucometer, please bring it with you.

What to Expect

- A nuclear medicine technologist will explain the scan, take your height and weight, and answer any questions you may have about the exam.
- A small IV (intravenous needle) will be placed in an arm vein. A small amount of blood will be taken to measure your blood glucose, followed by the injection of the radioactive tracer. The injection of the radioactive tracer has no side effects and is painless.
- You will be asked to rest quietly in a private room for 60 minutes. After the resting period, you will be asked to empty your bladder before the scan.
- The PET/CT scan itself takes about 20 minutes to complete.
- Friends and family members are welcome to wait in our waiting area during your scan.

Pregnant Women and New Mothers

- Generally, PET/CT scans are NOT performed on pregnant women. If you are pregnant or think you could be pregnant, discuss this with your physician.
- If you are breastfeeding, you should not breastfeed for **24 hours** after the scan. Nursing mothers are encouraged to pump and store milk before being injected with the radioactive tracer.

How to Find Us

Nuclear Medicine is located on level **L2** of the Dana building. To get to Nuclear Medicine from Dana-Farber's parking garage or any floor of the Yawkey Center for Cancer Care, please use one of the following route options.

A. From level P2 of the parking garage:

1. Walk through the **Tomsich Family Gallery** (gene display) to reach the **Dana building**.
2. Turn left after the Tomsich Family Gallery to find the **Nuclear Medicine** reception desk.

B. From the 3rd floor of the Yawkey Center for Cancer Care:

1. Cross the **PMC Bridge** to reach the **Dana building**.
2. Take a **Dana building elevator** down to level **L2**, where you'll find the **Nuclear Medicine** reception desk.

For driving directions to Dana-Farber, visit www.dana-farber.org/directions or call **617-632-3400**.

Questions?

A staff member from Nuclear Medicine will call you to review these instructions and answer any questions approximately 1-3 days before your scan. If you need to reschedule your appointment, call Nuclear Medicine at **617-632-3223**.