

Nuclear Medicine Patient Information

PET/CT Scan

Welcome to VCU Health Nuclear Medicine. We are located in the Gateway Building, 2nd floor, 1200 East Marshall Street. Our hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7 am to 5 pm. Advanced scheduling is required for all nuclear medicine exams. Please review the following information about your test. Please call (804) 828-6828 to schedule your test or if you have any questions about your nuclear medicine exam.

What is it?

Positron Emission Tomography/Computed Tomography imaging study evaluating cell metabolism.

Why are you having this test?

A PET scan is an effective way to examine the cell metabolism in certain parts of your body, which may help detect abnormalities in those areas. PET scans are most often used in people who have cancer or brain disorders.

Preparing for the test

- DO NOT eat or drink anything (except water) 4 hours prior to your test. [No gum, candy, cough drops, etc.]
- DO NOT exercise 24 hours prior to your test.
- Your Physician will instruct you regarding the use of medications before the test.

NOTE: Patients with diabetes should ask for specific diet/medication guidelines to control glucose during the day of your test. *There are limitations with the test if your blood sugar is not controlled during or before the test.*

- If you have a fear or feeling of being uncomfortable in small or closed-in spaces (claustrophobia), please discuss this with your Physician. You will be *required* to bring a driver if you take a sedative for this exam.
- Bring a picture ID and insurance information.

- Bring with you a current list of medications (including Over the Counter, Herbal, Vitamins, Supplements, etc.) and current allergies.
- Please arrive 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment.

What to expect during the test

- The test will take 2 - 3 hours.
- A blood sugar check will be done.
- A needle (IV) will be placed in a vein (intravenous catheter).
- A radioactive tracer will be administered through the IV.
- You will be asked to rest 45 – 60 minutes after injection in a darkened quiet room.
- You will lie down while the camera takes pictures of your body. Depending on the type of exam, imaging times will vary.

After Care Information

- You may return to all your normal activities.
- Most of the radioactive tracer leaves your body through your urine. Drinking extra fluids may help the tracer leave your body faster.

Contact information if questions or concerns

- Any Questions: Please contact us at (804) 628-9222 and ask to speak to a PET Technologist. After hours, please call (804) 828-3699.

Follow-Up Care after the procedure

- Results will be available in 1-2 business days.
- For Results: Please contact the Physician that ordered your test.