Information for a Brain PET Scan

Positron Emission Tomography (PET), is an imaging technique, which uses small amounts of radioactive tracers to help in the management of your condition. A PET scanner is used to produce an image showing the distribution of the tracer in the brain. The radiotracers used for a PET scan are substances naturally found in the body and are administered in small amounts via a vein in the arm. There are no known side effects. The scan is performed on a camera that looks like a CT scanner.

Preparing for a PET scan

The entire test takes around 1 hour to complete. Follow the checklist below. You may bring a support person with you, but not a pregnant woman or child.

Checklist

Contact us if you are arriving by ambulance transport or have been admitted to hospital

Fasting:

- Do not eat or drink for 6 hours prior to your appointment
- You may drink water only
- This includes lollies, mints and gums

Diabetes:

- If you have a morning appointment, you will be required to fast from midnight. Do not take your morning insulin or tablets.
- If your appointment is later in the day, you may be able to eat breakfast. If you do, take your morning insulin or tablets.
- A high blood glucose level may result in poor quality PET images and may result in cancellation of your scan. Please ensure your blood glucose level is close to 7 mmol/L for your scan
- If you control your diabetes with insulin, bring your insulin with you
- If you are unsure, please contact us.

- Do not bring children or pregnant women with you
- You will need to avoid contact with children and pregnant women following your scan

On the day of your PET scan:

- A staff member will take your clinical history, explain the test and give you the chance to ask any questions you may have.
- You will be given an injection of the radiotracer into a vein in your arm
- After the injection, you will need to lie quietly in a room for 30 minutes
- The scan generally takes 15 minutes
- A report with the details of your scan will be sent to your referring Doctor
- Please ensure an appointment is made with your referring doctor to get the results

Further information

If you have any questions regarding this information, call the Department of Molecular Imaging and Therapy on (03) 9496 5718