

Nuclear Medicine

Fluorine-18 FDG PET-CT scan

This leaflet will help you prepare for your visit to the Nuclear Medicine Department. Please read the information and call us if you have any questions. We are happy to help.

What is an F-18 FDG PET-CT scan?

PET-CT (Positron Emission Tomography with Computerised Tomography) helps doctors see inside your body. It uses a small amount of radioactive material. During the test, you will get an injection of Fluorine-18 FDG (fluorodeoxyglucose), which is like glucose. The PET scanner looks for places in your body that have a lot of glucose, this can help identify various conditions. A CT scan happens at the same time to show exactly where those areas are.

Please call the department when you get this letter to let us know you can come to your appointment. We can then order the injection needed for your test. If you do not confirm, your appointment will be cancelled.

Telephone: 024 7696 8212

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm

When you call to confirm your appointment, we will ask you about:

- When you had any recent treatments, like radiotherapy or chemotherapy
- When you had any recent biopsies or surgeries



Patient information

- Any medications you are taking
- Any other recent scans you have had

This information is important because it will help us pick them for your test. We might need to change your appointment based on your answers.

Please also tell us as soon as you can if:

- You are pregnant or think you might be
- You are breastfeeding
- You have diabetes
- You have additional needs
- You will be using ambulance transport for your appointment and your appointment time is after midday
- You don't live in your own private home (such as a care home)

Please plan to be at the appointment for up to 3 hours.

How should you prepare?

- Do not eat anything for 6 hours before your scan
- You can drink plain, unflavoured water during this time.
- Do not drink tea, coffee, alcohol, squash, fizzy drinks, or flavoured water.
- Bring a list of the medications you take.

It's important to stay hydrated, try to drink at least 3 glasses of plain water before you come. If you take any liquid medicine, let us know because it might have sugar in it, which can affect your test results.

If you have diabetes, please tell us before your appointment. We might need to change your appointment time to fit around your meal and medications.

Patient information

If you got a questionnaire with this information, please fill it out and bring it with you. If you didn't get one, don't worry. We will give you one when you arrive.

Please wear loose clothing that don't have metal zips, buttons or studs. If your clothes have metal, you will need to change into a hospital gown.

Make sure to leave early to get to your appointment on time. The tracer we use is made just for you and has a very short shelf life, so scans cannot be delayed. Your injection will be prepared for you once you have arrived in the department.

What will happen when you come for your scan?

When you arrive, we will check a few things before the test. We will measure your height, weight, and blood sugar level. If your blood sugar level is too high, we might not be able to do the test. We will check your questionnaire results and answer any questions you have.

You will get an injection through a small needle in your arm. After the injection, it takes some time for it to be taken up by your body. You will need to rest on a bed for about an hour after the injection. This helps the FDG to be taken up by your body properly. It is important to stay still and relax during this time, so please do not read, or use your phone, or listen to music. Moving around too much can affect the pictures we take.

Because the injection is radioactive, your family cannot wait close to you. They can stay in a different area of the department, and we can let them know when it's time to collect you.

After you get the injection, try to keep time spent close to small children and pregnant people to as short as possible for the rest of the day. You can still take care of children and give them essential love and care.

It is very unlikely you will feel any side effects after the test. If you do feel unwell, please let us know.

Patient information

What happens when the pictures are taken?

Before you go into the scanning room, you will need to empty your bladder. You will lie on a special bed that goes into the PET-CT scanner. It is important to stay as still as you can, but you can breathe normally.

The scan will take about 20 to 45 minutes. As the bed moves through the scanner, it will take pictures of your body. We will be able to see you throughout the scan.

What happens after the scan?

After the scan, you'll need to wait for a few minutes while we check your images. We will tell you when this is complete, and you can leave. We cannot talk about the results right away. The Doctor who asked for the scan will usually get the results in 3 to 5 working days.

How much radiation will you receive?

This test exposes you to ionising radiation. The amount of radiation is about 7.6 mSv (millisievert). 7.6 mSv is about the same amount of natural radiation you get living in the UK for 2 years and 9 months.

Your doctor has recommended this scan because the benefit to you outweighs the very low risk of harm. The risk of getting cancer because of this radiation is around 1 person in 2632. This is very small compared with the 1 in 2 risk of someone getting cancer naturally in their lifetime.

Directions and car parking

The Nuclear Medicine department is a short walk from the main entrance on the ground floor. When you enter the hospital through the main entrance, turn left to go into the West wing. Follow the signs for X-ray along the corridor, and you'll find X-ray on the left, just after the Fracture Clinic. Go to the X-ray reception and walk straight ahead. Follow signs for Nuclear Medicine. You will go through the double doors and enter the main reception area of the department.

There is parking available for patients and visitors, but spaces can be limited, so it is a good idea to arrive early. There is a charge for parking, and automatic number plate recognition systems are in use. For more

Patient information

details about directions, parking charges, and site maps, visit the trust website at (www.uhcw.nhs.uk).

Relatives and escorts

You can bring a friend or relative with you to your appointment but please **do not** bring children or pregnant people with you.

Facilities available in the hospital

- Chilled water dispenser in the department.
- Costa Coffee, M&S and WHSmith in the main reception foyer.
- Three hospital restaurants.

What if you still have questions?

If you have any questions or concerns, we're here to help. Call the person who referred you for this treatment or call Nuclear Medicine.

The Nuclear Medicine department is open: **Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm**

Phone: 02476 96 8212

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 8212 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

Document History
Department: Nuclear Medicine
Contact: 28212
Updated: February 2025
Review: February 2027
Version: 7
Reference: HIC/LFT/734/08

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This will help us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.

Have your say. Scan the QR code or visit:
www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback

