

## About your scan (PET/CT appointment)

Information about your scan and how to prepare for it.

### About the facility

Your scan will be on a mobile unit, located in the grounds of the facility (usually a car park). The mobile unit looks like a large white trailer with PET/CT Scanner written on the side. The location will be on your appointment letter as well as on a map which details the site layout.

There are some instances when your scan may take place at one of our purpose built centres in London and Nottingham. If this is the case, you will be told by the Patient Referral Centre when your appointment is booked.

The units are staffed by Radiographers, Nuclear Medicine Technologists and Healthcare Assistants.

### What is a PET/CT scan?

Before the scan you will be given an injection (usually in the arm) of a low-dose radioactive form of glucose tracer, which allows the measuring of the activity of cells in different parts of the body.

After a rest period of about an hour, a scan is then carried out which is painless and usually takes about 30 minutes. The scan is a sophisticated type of X-Ray that creates a three-dimensional picture of the inside of the body. The images taken produce a detailed picture of the internal anatomy and function. These images will allow your doctor to plan any treatment required more accurately.

The scan procedure takes approximately 2 hours.

### What preparation do I need?

You should not eat for 6 hours prior to your scan appointment time.

You should not eat or drink meal supplements or liquid food for 6 hours prior to your appointment time.

**Prior to your appointment you should drink plenty of plain water, but please avoid water which is flavoured or diluted with cordial.**

Please continue to take your usual medication on the day of the scan including pain killers. Bring your medication with you should it coincide with your scan time.

**If you are a diabetic patient, please make sure that the Patient Referral Centre is aware of this at booking. You will receive special instructions for your scan. Please make sure that you follow the advice given or you might not be able to have the scan.**

Please avoid strenuous physical activity for 24 hours before the scan e.g. Horse riding, exercising in the gym.

**What to wear**

Please leave all jewellery at home and wear comfortable clothes that contain little metal, a tracksuit is ideal.

Some patients feel cold on the units even on a warm day, so please bring warm clothes, such as a fleece or a jumper to wear.

You will not normally change in to a gown for the scan and will remain in your clothes, female patients will be asked to remove their bra just prior to scan.

**Important information you need to know about the PET/CT unit**

You cannot bring friends or relatives to the mobile PET/CT unit. Friends and relatives who accompany you to the unit, will have to wait outside the unit, but will be advised when you are ready to leave. This is because of the limited space available on a mobile unit.

Please do not bring children or pregnant friends, because the PET/CT scan uses radiation.

If you are pregnant or think that you might be pregnant or you are breast feeding, please contact the Patient Referral Centre Tel: 0845 600 2953.

**What happens on the day of the scan?**

You should arrive 15 minutes before your scan appointment time.

If you realise that you will be late or unable to attend the unit please contact the Patient Referral Centre: 0845 600 2953.

After you have been greeted at reception, a member of staff will explain the procedure.

Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the PET/CT scan at this point. A member of staff will then take a short medical history from you to assist the doctor who reads the scan.

You will be asked to sign a consent form, please see the section below on giving consent.

The Radiographer or Nuclear Medicine Technologist will then inject a small amount of 18FDG (low-dose radioactive form of glucose) into a vein in your arm. This is a colourless liquid used in the scan.

You will then rest for approximately 1 hour prior to your scan. During this rest period you will be asked not to talk, as this can affect the distribution of the tracer. Depending on the type of scan your doctor has requested, you may be able to read or listen to music during this period so please bring a book or personal music device with you. The rest period is to allow the body time to take up the injection and is important.

You will then be asked to visit the toilet to empty your bladder prior to your scan. This is to ensure the bladder is empty and gives a good view of the pelvic region. Following this you will

be taken through for your scan, which will last approximately 30 minutes. For the scan you will be asked to lie flat on a narrow scanning table. You will then be free to leave the PET/CT unit.

### **What precautions do I need to take after the scan?**

Please avoid prolonged close contact with children and pregnant women for 6 hours after the scan.

### **How much radiation do I receive from the scan?**

The equivalent to a period of a few years natural background radiation for each part of the scan (PET and CT scans). The radiation injected for the scan fades over time, with most of it decaying in the first 6 hours. The radiation has a very short physical half-life (the time taken to reduce the radioactivity by half).

### **What do I do after the scan?**

You should continue to drink plenty of fluids for the remainder of the day.

After the scan you can eat and drink normally, so please bring something with you to consume on your way home.

### **How do I get my results?**

The scan is usually reviewed within 48 hours and the result will be sent to the doctor who referred you for the PET/CT scan.

### **The staff at the PET/CT unit cannot issue the results to you.**

They are not permitted to do so as the Consultant must review both the scan and any previous scans or information.

### **Important information**

The <sup>18</sup>F-FDG (the radioactive form of glucose) tracer, has a very short half-life and therefore can not be kept in stock. Production of every dose occurs on the morning of the scan. The manufacturing process is extremely complex and subsequently, on rare occasions, the production may be unsuccessful or of low yield with the consequence that we will have to cancel your appointment. Such incidents are unfortunately out of our control and whilst we will always do our best to honour your appointment, inevitably there will be occasions when this is not possible. In the event of this occurring, we will endeavour to inform you of the cancellation as soon as possible, but this would normally be on the same day as the scan. We will of course issue you with the next available appointment date that is convenient to you.

### **About InHealth**

InHealth is delivering the NHS PET/CT Diagnostic Imaging Service on behalf of the NHS. InHealth is a leading provider of healthcare services operating in the UK and Ireland, working with both the NHS and independent healthcare providers. We provide our service in partnership with local NHS organisations including Primary Care Trusts and the Strategic Health Authority. We aim to provide PET/CT scans that are convenient and easily accessible for you. The

company vision is founded upon a desire to improve healthcare provision through the delivery of innovative, efficient, appropriate and cutting edge services.

For more information, please visit our website <http://www.nhspetctsouth.com> or contact us as shown below:

**Patient Information Line:** 0845 600 2953

**Fax:** 0845 600 2954

**Email:** [infopetct@inhealthgroup.com](mailto:infopetct@inhealthgroup.com)

For further information on PET/CT scanning please visit:  
<http://www.cancerhelp.org.uk/help/default.asp?page=26428#what>

### **Consent**

Within InHealth there are two types of consent:

- Consent for carrying out a procedure
- Consent for data sharing

Within InHealth there is a Consent Policy which aims to ensure that the rights of all InHealth patients to be fully involved in decisions about their care are protected and that no treatment or procedure will be carried out on a patient without valid consent.

For consent to be valid, it must be given voluntarily by an appropriately informed person who has the capacity to consent to the procedure in question

### **This is distinct from consent for data sharing.**

The patient information leaflet provided supports this consent process and provides information specific to the procedure to be undertaken to enable you to be in a position to give valid consent for the procedure. The leaflet contains information about the nature of the test or procedure and any options are available along with the purpose of these.

Consent for a procedure to be undertaken, depending on the circumstances can be either verbal or written. This is distinct to consent for data sharing, which must be given in writing.

Valid consent in writing must be sought for the following:-

- Injection of contrast agents
- Injection of radioactive substances
- When a patient is pregnant and has been referred for an examination involving the use of magnetic resonance imaging or ionising radiation eg plain film x rays or CT
- Intimate examinations or procedures

Written consent should be recorded on the relevant InHealth consent form.

You will also be asked to sign to confirm that information that you have given to InHealth is true and accurate. This is not the same as consent for the procedure but acts as evidence that the radiographer and the patient have agreed that the information has been obtained and reported accurately.

## **Data Sharing**

For all patients undergoing clinical procedures consent to data sharing is also required. InHealth in line with any other organisation who needs to share data across more than one organisation is required by law to seek the individuals consent.

This consent covers both:

- Data Sharing between organisations
- Use of anonymised images or results for research, training and teaching

If you do not consent to data sharing by signing the Data Protection Act declaration your investigation cannot proceed as data sharing is involved in the transfer of images for reporting, clinical audit and provision of a report for the referring consultant or GP

For NHS patients, InHealth is obliged to carryout an audit programme which requires images and reports to be sent to an independent Clinician. The auditor is subject to the InHealth duty of confidentiality. The audit results do not contain any patient identifiable data.

Inhealth has a strict policy regarding patient confidentiality which means that we never share information about patients with anyone/organisation that does not need to know about the patient's clinical condition. InHealth never shares any information about patients with commercial companies or give personal details to anyone who works outside of our company, its clinical providers and the local NHS.

## **How to Complain**

If you have a complaint about any part of the service you have received from us, you can do one of the following.

1. Discuss it with the Unit Manager during your visit.
2. Write to the Complaints Coordinator, InHealth, Beechwood Hall, Kingsmead Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 1JL.
3. Or email your complaint to: [complaints@inhealthgroup.com](mailto:complaints@inhealthgroup.com)
4. Use the NHS complaints procedure on the Department of Health's website at: [www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/ComplaintsPolicy/fs/en](http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/ComplaintsPolicy/fs/en).

We welcome your comments about our service. We recognise that the way we monitor and handle complaints reflects the quality of our service and represents an opportunity for us to continuously improve.

When we are handling your complaint, we promise to:

- be accessible – you can contact us to check on the progress of your complaint;
- be impartial – we will treat every complaint fairly;
- be responsive – we will reply to you as soon as we can, and let you know if there will be a delay; and
- respect your confidentiality.

We will attempt to sort out your complaint as soon as possible after receiving it. We will usually acknowledge written complaints within 48 hours of receiving them, and send you a full reply within 20 working days of your complaint. If we cannot sort out your complaint within 20 working days, we will tell you what progress we have made and why there has been a delay.

A complaints handler will deal with your complaint. If you are not satisfied with their reply, you can ask for your complaint to be referred to the Operations Director.

The NHS PET/CT Diagnostic Imaging Service is run by InHealth on behalf of the NHS. InHealth Limited is a company registered in England and Wales (Registered No. 5190234). The Registered Office is Beechwood Hall, Kingsmead Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP11 1JL.

---

Ends