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**Please note: If there is a chance your child may be pregnant, tell a member of the care team before the test, so we can contact their doctor to see if the test still needs to be done.**

## What is a PET with CT scan?

A PET with CT scan:

- Is a test that uses a radioactive substance (called a tracer) to look for problems and disease in the body.
- Is done in Radiology.
- Shows how body organs and tissues work and function.

This is different than an MRI or plain CT scan. MRI and CT scans show the structure and blood flow of organs.

## What do I do before the scan?

- Do not give your child anything to eat or drink for 6 hours before the test, including gum or candy.
  - They must have an empty stomach.
  - If their stomach is not empty, we will need to delay or reschedule for another day.
- Tell the care team about any medicines your child is taking. This includes over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs and supplements.
- Also tell them if your child has any allergies.
- Your child may need to change into a hospital gown.
- Have your child remove all jewelry. Tell the care team if your child has any metal objects in their body that could show up on the scan, such as braces and dental hardware.

## What will the scan be like?

- A member of the care team will place an I.V. in your child's hand or arm.
  - An I.V. is a way to give your child medicine and fluids.
  - The letters "I.V." stand for intravenous, meaning "in the vein."
  - Medicines or fluids are carried through a thin, plastic tube into a vein. From there, it is carried by the blood to the rest of your child's body.
- The care team will place warm blankets on your child to help the body take in the tracer.
- Your child may drink something called contrast.
  - Contrast is medicine that allows the doctor to see your child's body organs better.
  - The care team will mix the contrast with water or a sugar free drink.
- Your child may get a medicine to help the body take in the tracer. If so, they will get this 10 to 15 minutes before they get the tracer through their I.V.

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**

# PET with CT scan, continued

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- A technologist will give your child a small amount of the tracer through the I.V.
- Your child will rest for about 1 hour until the tracer has time to reach the organs.
- When ready, your child must lie flat and still on a special table. If your child is younger than 10 years old or is unable to lie still, they will get medicine to help them relax, sleep and be still. This is needed to get good pictures during the scan.
- During the scan:
  - The table moves inside a large tube with an opening in the middle.
  - The scanner does not touch or hurt your child.
  - The scanner takes pictures of your child's organs and sends them to a computer.
  - The scan takes about 20 minutes.

## Are there any risks?

- PET scans and CT scans are NOT safe for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. The tracer can be passed to a baby in the womb or in the breast milk.
- Bleeding, pain or swelling can happen where the I.V. is placed.

## What happens after the scan?

- If your child is not staying in the hospital, you will be able to take them home after the scan.
- If your child received medicine to help them sleep, they will need to be fully awake before going home.
- Most of the tracer leaves your child's body through the urine within a few hours of the scan.
  - The doctor may tell you to have your child drink more fluids, such as water or juice, after the scan.
  - This helps to flush the tracer out of the body.

## When do I get the results?

We will send results to the doctor who ordered the scan:

- Once the radiologist has finished looking at them.
- Within 48 hours.

Please allow time for your child's doctor to review the results before contacting them.

You can also find the results in your child's MYchart account 16 to 24 hours **after** the radiologist approves them. Talk with the care team for more information about MYchart.

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# PET with CT scan, continued

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## How should I prepare my child?

### Babies

- Bring a special blanket, toy or pacifier.
- Comfort your baby with your presence and voice.
- Bring along a bottle of juice or formula to feed them **after** the scan.

### Toddlers and preschoolers

- Young children remember things for only a short time. The best time to talk about the scan is right before it is time to leave for the hospital.
- Tell your child they will have some special “pictures” taken, so the doctor can help them feel better.
- Use simple words, and be honest with them.
- Tell your child that you will stay with them as much as possible during the scan.
- Bring a favorite book, toy or blanket.
- You may also bring along a snack for **after** the scan.

### School-age children

- It is important to be honest with school-age children. They may think something worse than what is really going to happen.
- One or 2 days before the scan, tell your child they are going to have some special “pictures” taken of their body.
- Use simple words, and be honest with your child. Try to tell them exactly what will happen.
- Tell your child know that you will stay with them as much as possible during the scan.
- Bring along a favorite book, toy or game.
- You may also bring along a snack for **after** the scan.

**This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child’s doctor or a member of your child’s healthcare team about specific care of your child.**

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