



Diagnostic Services
Rutland Regional Medical Center
160 Allen Street Rutland, VT 05701
802-747-1755

APPOINTMENT

Date _____

Arrive at _____

Appointment time _____

PET/CT – Patient Instructions for _____

TO PREPARE FOR THE EXAM:

1. Avoid heavy exercise starting the Wednesday morning before your test.
2. Non-Diabetics:
 - Have NO food or drink (except water) for the 6 hours before your Appointment Time. Drink plenty of water; being well hydrated is important.
 - Starting Thursday morning, you should not have any sugary food or drinks. For example, avoid fruit, fruit juice, soda, candy, desserts, cereal.
 - If you have prescription medicine to take before your scan, take it ONLY with water.

DIABETICS: Your scan will be scheduled for the middle of the day. Have a light breakfast with your normal diabetes medicine early in morning. During the 4 hours before your Appointment Time, do not have anything else except water, not even insulin.

3. Dress in warm, comfortable clothing, such as sweatpants and sweatshirt. The scan room is kept cool (about 60-65 degrees). You will not need to undress for the test.

WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU:

1. Bring with you all ACTUAL films of all diagnostic tests (MRI, CT, x-ray) done at any facility other than RRMC.
2. Do not bring children or pregnant women with you.
3. **DIABETICS:** You MUST bring your insulin or pills. Blood sugar will be checked before scan.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- You must arrive 1½ hours before your Appointment Time at the Diagnostic Imaging front desk.
- A nurse will place a small IV catheter in your arm.
- You will be taken to a room where you will be given a small amount of a radioactive tracer for the scan. You will rest for about 45-60 minutes while it travels through your body.
- You will then be brought to the PET/CT scanner. The actual scan will take less than one hour.
- Total time you will be here is usually 2 – 2½ hours.
- After the Radiologist checks the scan, you may leave and continue with your regular activities.

**If it is absolutely necessary to cancel your scan, we require 48 hours notice.
Please call 802-747-1880.**

More Information about Your PET/CT

PET stands for Positron Emission Tomography. CT stands for Computed Tomography. PET scan examines your body's chemistry. Glucose (a sugar) is a substance every cell in your body needs in order to function. When diseases strike, the chemistry of your tissues and cells changes. In cancer, for example, cells begin to grow at a much faster rate, feeding on sugars like glucose.

To begin the testing, a small IV catheter will be placed into your arm. Then a small amount of radioactive glucose (a "tracer") is given to you through your bloodstream.

This glucose tracer travels through your body and gives off signals. In a short time, it collects in the organs that need to be examined. If an area in an organ is cancerous, more glucose tracer will collect there. The signals will be stronger in that area than in the tissue around it. The PET scanner records these signals and transforms them into pictures.

With cancer, PET can distinguish between benign (non-cancerous) and malignant (cancerous) tumors. It can stage cancer – that is, show if and where it may have spread. It can also help to decide whether or not treatments are working.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN ON THE DAY OF THE TEST:

Because you have been pre-registered, you should come directly to the RRMC Diagnostic Imaging Department.

A nurse from the x-ray department will meet you. He or she will ask you a few questions, like your height, weight, if you are diabetic or if you have any allergies. They will then insert a small IV catheter into your arm. This IV will stay in your arm for the rest of the PET scan.

You will be escorted to PET scanner for the beginning of your test. A specially trained PET technologist will then give you the glucose tracer through your IV line. This is painless, and you will feel no side effects from the radioactivity of the tracer.

The glucose tracer takes thirty to ninety minutes to travel through your body and collect in your organs. During this time, you will be asked to rest quietly with little movement or talking. After that time has passed, the scanning will begin.

You will lie on a narrow table which moves slowly through the PET scanner, which is doughnut-shaped. Within the scanner are rings of sensors that record the signals from the glucose tracer in your body. These sensors allow the computers attached to the scanner to produce an image.

AFTER THE PET SCAN ...

... you should feel fine. There are no side effects from the glucose tracer. You can return to your normal activities and normal diet following the scan. You should drink extra fluids for several hours after the scan.

The PET scan is usually read within 24 hours. The results will be sent to your doctor. You should contact your doctor after the examination to discuss the PET scan results.