

Nuclear medicine department

Information about your Ga68 PET-CT scan

What is a Ga68 DOTATOC PET-CT scan?

PET-CT (Positron Emission Tomography with Computerised Tomography) is a scanning method that allows us to detect abnormalities in the body. For this scan we will give you an injection containing a small amount of radioactivity called Ga68 DOTATOC which helps us to identify certain types of tumours arising from the neuroendocrine systems.

Is there any preparation for my PET-CT scan?

- It is very important that you telephone at least 40 hours before the appointment to confirm that you will be attending. Telephone 0161 446 3942 or 3946.
- Please let us know as soon as possible if you are having any of the following as it may be necessary to schedule the scan to fit in with your injections:
 - monthly ocreotide LAR (also known as Sandostatin LAR)
 - monthly lanreotide (also known as Lanreotide Autogel) or
 - short-acting ocreotide injections (usually 2-3 times per day).

This is because a short interruption of the drug may be needed prior to the scan. If required we will discuss this with your consultant.

You should continue to take your other medications as usual. You should continue to eat and drink normally before the scan.

- Please try to leave all jewellery at home as all metal will need to be removed for the scan, including metal on clothes. We suggest you wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothes to avoid having to change into a hospital gown.
- Please allow plenty of time to get to your appointment. The tracer is individually ordered for you and has a very short shelf life so scans cannot normally be delayed.
- Please do not bring along anyone who is pregnant or under 18 years of age.
- You should expect to be in the department for 3 to 4 hours altogether.
- You must tell us in advance if you know you are (or think you may be) pregnant or breast feeding.



What happens during my PET-CT scan?

Our staff will fully explain the procedure to you when you arrive for your appointment. Only when you have arrived will our staff be able to make up your injection as it has to be prepared and injected over a short space of time. You will be given a time to return to the department for your injection. This is usually about 60 to 90 minutes after you arrive. During this time you will be able to go off to the café if you wish. When you return a cannula (small tube) will be inserted into a vein in either your hand or arm, and then the radioactive tracer will be given through it. The cannula may need to remain in place until the scan is complete.

If you have a central venous line (either a PICC or Hickman® line), we may be able to give you your injection through it. If you have a Totally Implanted Vascular Access device (TIVAD or Portacath®) please tell us when you arrive as we will need to allow some extra time to get it accessed.

You will then be asked to sit and relax quietly, alone, for around 60 minutes before having the scan. You can listen to music and read but will not be able to have anyone sitting with you during this time for radioprotection reasons. You can continue to eat and drink.

Just before the scan begins, you will be asked to empty your bladder. We will then ask you to lie on the scan bed, with your arms raised above your head, or by your sides. We will make sure you are as comfortable as possible for the scan, as it is extremely important that you remain as still as you can.

Most scans last between 30 to 45 minutes.

Will I feel anything during my scan?

There are no side effects from the tracer injection; it will not make you feel sleepy or affect your ability to drive.

If you are in a lot of pain or find it difficult to keep still, please tell us.

What happens after my PET-CT scan?

We will ask you to sit in the waiting room for about 15 minutes while we check the technical quality of your scan, and that we have all the information we need.

Continue to drink plenty of fluid for the rest of the day, and empty your bladder regularly.

A radiologist will report the scan and then the results will be sent to the consultant who referred you. We will not be able to give you any results on the day.

How safe is the examination?

There are small risks associated with radiation from the tracer that you have been given. However, the images give the doctors important information about your condition that helps in your treatment. The benefits of the information from the scan outweigh the small risks from the exposure to radiation.

What are the benefits of my PET-CT scan?

A PET-CT scan allows us to perform two types of scan at the same time, without movement, giving us a more complete picture of your body. It allows us to look at both the structure (what it looks like) and function (how it works) of the organs and tissues. It is very detailed and sensitive, so will help the doctors looking after you to monitor your treatment. It also gives them different information from that of a CT or MRI scan.

What happens if I decide not to have a PET-CT scan?

If you decide not to have the PET-CT scan, then please discuss this with the doctor who is looking after you.

Please attend promptly at the time shown on the attached appointment letter.

If you have any questions about this appointment or any questions about the examination, please telephone the number below

0161 446 3942 or 3946

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact patient.information@christie.nhs.uk

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for
urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

