

What is a Cardiac PET scan?

A cardiac PET scan, or positron emission tomography scan, is a noninvasive imaging test that uses radioactive tracers to create detailed pictures of the heart. It can help identify problems in the heart, such as poor blood flow, disease, damage, and blockages. There is no exercise involved and is usually a 30-minute-long test.

Test Prep / Instructions

1. Arrive 15 minutes before your PET scan.
2. **Tobacco:** Don't smoke on the day of your scan.
3. You may have a very light carbohydrate breakfast (toast, english muffin, or oatmeal) the morning of your test with water only. If you're scheduled for the afternoon, you may have a light snack beforehand.
4. **DO NOT** eat or drink anything with caffeine for **24 hours** before your appointment. This includes chocolate, hot chocolate, chocolate milk, soda, tea, and coffee. Some over-the-counter medications also contain caffeine, including Anacin, Excedrin, and NoDoz. **Please note that decaffeinated products also contain some caffeine and should be avoided. If these products are consumed within 24 hours, your test will be cancelled.**
5. Please wear loose, comfortable clothing to your appointment and do not apply oil, lotion or cream to your skin on the day of your test.
6. **If you are anxious or claustrophobic**, speak to your referring physician about taking an anti-anxiety medication on the day of your appointment. We are unable to prescribe and administer medication for this exam.
7. You will be given a radiotracer, and vasodilating medication through an intravenous (IV) line in your arm as part of the test.
8. **Do not take** Nitroglycerine, Viagra, Cialis, or Levitra 72 Hours prior to your test.
9. **Continue to take all prescribed medications as scheduled, unless instructed to do otherwise.**
10. If you are considered a "hard stick" for IVs, start drinking water 24 hours before your appointment, to ensure proper hydration and make vein access easier for healthcare professionals.
11. **For the test, you will need to lie flat on your back for about 20 minutes, and extend your arms up over your head. If you feel you are unable to do this, please let the office know.**