

at airports, train stations or seaports. In the unlikely event that this occurs there is no need to be alarmed. Customs officials will understand what has happened, however, we recommend you carry your appointment letter with you as proof of your recent test.

Contact details

Direct line: 020 3447 0562

Switchboard: 0845 155 5000/ 020 3456 7890

Extension: 70565

Fax: 020 3447 0591

Email: inmclinic@uclh.nhs.uk

Address: Institute of Nuclear Medicine,
5th Floor, Tower, 235 Euston Road,
London. NW1 2BU

Website: www.uclh.nhs.uk

Where can I get more information?

NHS Clinical Knowledge Summaries
www.cks.nhs.uk

Society of Nuclear Medicine
www.snm.org

UCL Hospitals cannot accept responsibility for information provided by external organisations.

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this document, please contact us on 020 3447 0562. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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Information for patients and carers

FDG PET/CT Scan



Department of Nuclear Medicine

Introduction

This leaflet has been written to give you the basic facts about an FDG PET/CT scan. If you have any queries about the information below, please don't hesitate to ask a member of the medical team.

1. What is an FDG PET/CT scan?

FDG is a sugar (glucose) labelled with a small amount of radioactivity which goes to parts of the body that use glucose for energy. PET/CT images are acquired on a single scanner. An FDG PET/CT scan can be used to assess the presence, location and severity of cancers. It can also be used for other conditions such as infection/inflammation and conditions which affect the brain.

2. What are the risks of an FDG PET/CT scan?

You will be given an injection into a vein which will contain a small amount of radioactivity and you will also be imaged using X-rays during the CT part of the study. The radioactivity leaves your body quickly and will not make you feel unwell. Your doctor has considered that the low risk linked to the radiation from this valuable test is safe for you to receive. **However, as radiation can harm unborn children, before we start the test please let us know if you are or**

might be pregnant. Also, if you are breastfeeding, please let us know.

3. What will happen if I choose not to have an PET/CT scan?

There may be an alternative test you can have. You should discuss the various options with your doctor.

4. What alternatives are available?

There are numerous ways to assess cancers, inflammation and the brain, and you should discuss with your doctor which tests may be suitable.

5. How should I prepare for an FDG PET/CT scan?

You should have nothing to eat or drink except plain water for **six** hours before your appointment time. You may continue any medication that can be taken with water and tolerated on an empty stomach. If you are diabetic please contact us at least two days before your scan on 0845 155 5000 extension 70503.

6. What happens during an FDG PET/CT scan?

You will be asked to lie flat on a motorised imaging couch and will pass through the camera during imaging. Your face will only be enclosed for a very brief time. Occasionally

images are required immediately after injection of the radioactive tracer. The main scan is acquired 60 - 90 minutes after injection, and you will be asked to rest quietly during this time. You will need to keep as still as possible during imaging which normally takes 30 minutes but may take up to an hour. Please note: FDG is produced off site on a daily basis by a complex process and very occasionally there is a production problem. If this happens we may need to cancel your appointment at short notice but we will rebook you for the first available convenient date.

7. What should I expect after an FDG PET/CT scan?

Once we have checked that the scans are complete, you can leave and return to your normal activities. You will be able to drive as the test does not cause drowsiness. Although the level of radiation is small we advise you to avoid close contact with children and pregnant women for the rest of the day. The test will be interpreted by a Nuclear Medicine Specialist and a written report sent to your referring doctor, usually within 24 hours. If you are planning to travel abroad in the near future you may trigger one of the very sensitive radiation detectors located