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PET/CT Ga-68 Gozetotide PSMA Scan

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout explains a PET/CT Ga-68 PSMA scan. It tells how the scan works, how to prepare, what to expect, and how to get your results.

What is a PET/CT Ga-68 PSMA scan?

This scan is used to diagnose cancer in the prostate gland. It uses a special camera to take both *positron emission tomography* (PET) images and *computed tomography* (CT) images.

The scan uses a radioactive *tracer* called Ga-68 Gozetotide (Ilucix, Locametz). This tracer helps prostate cancer cells show up more clearly in the images.

This scan is done for patients who have high levels of a protein called *prostate-specific membrane antigen* (PSMA) in their prostate cancer cells. High levels of PSMA often mean that the disease has progressed.

Why do I need this scan?

Your doctor has asked you to have this PET/CT scan because of your recent blood test results. This scan will tell us if prostate cancer has recurred or *metastasized* (spread).

How is the scan done?

First, we will inject the tracer into your vein. If you have cancer cells in your body, those cells will absorb the tracer.

An hour later, we will use the PET/CT camera to take images of your body. The camera does 2 types of scans:

- The PET scan shows where the tracer has collected in your body.
- The CT scan creates pictures of your body's structures.

Together, these scans help your doctor see changes in your cells.



A PET/CT camera

How do I prepare?

If you have a strong fear of enclosed places or concerns about pain, talk with your provider about *sedation* (medicine to help you relax).

On the Day of Your Scan

- You do not need to do anything special on the day of your scan. You may eat as usual.
- Be sure to drink plenty of water before and after the scan. This will help flush the tracer from your cells.
- Bring with you any recent scans you have had done related to this health condition.

What should I expect?

- While you are in the prep room, a nuclear medicine technologist or nurse, or both, will:
 - Insert an *intravenous* (IV) tube into a vein in your arm or hand.
 - Inject the tracer into your IV.
- You will then wait 1 hour in the prep room. This allows time for your cells to absorb the tracer. This is called *tracer uptake*.
- After 1 hour, we will ask you to empty your bladder.
- The technologist will then take you to the PET/CT scan area.
- We will ask you lie on your back on the scanner table and raise your arms above your head.
- You will lie inside the PET/CT camera during the scans. Most of the time, your head will not be enclosed.
- The PET/CT camera will take images. Most scans will cover the area from the top of your skull down to the middle of your thighs.
- Expect to be in the PET department for 2 to 2½ hours. The imaging itself takes about 30 minutes.

What will I feel during the scan?

- You may feel some discomfort when the IV is placed.
- You will need to lie flat on your back with your arms over your head for up to 30 minutes. We will use pillows to help support your body in this position.
- During the scan, you must hold very still and breathe normally.
- The tracer does not cause any discomfort while it is in your body.

What happens after the scan?

After the scan, drink plenty of fluids. This will help flush the tracer out of your body. The radioactivity is gone within a day.

Who reads the scan and how will I get the results?

A radiologist or nuclear medicine doctor will read your scan, and also review past scans you may have brought with you. They will share the results with your provider within 3 days.

Your own provider will give you your scan results. You and your provider will then decide the next step, such as treatment for a problem, as needed.

You may also read your results on your MyChart page. If you need copies of your images on disc, call 206.598.6206.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- UWMC - Montlake Imaging Services/Nuclear Medicine: 206.598.6200
- Fred Hutch Cancer Center PET: 206.606.7191
- Fred Hutch Cancer Center Nuclear Medicine: 206.606.7045
- Harborview Nuclear Medicine: 206.744.4473